FOR FRIENDS

A COMPILATION OF THE SELECTED DISCOURSES OF HADHRAT MAULÁNÁ MUHAMMAD MASÍHUL-LÁH KHÁN SÁHIB رحمة الله عليه

Prepared by
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Published by
Al-Namal Publications

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was born in Sarai Barlah in the district of Aligarh in the year 1329 or1330 H. Hadhrat's رحمة الله عليه lineage is linked to the noble Sharwání family of landed nobility and, being linked to Sayyid Hussain Ghaurí رحمة الله عليه, the lineage is also Sayyid. Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه attended the local government school up to standard six, but did not continue with his secular education, rather preferring to study Dín which he studied initially in his hometown and, thereafter, completing his studies in Deoband. Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه became bai'at to Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمة الله عليه, from whom Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه received his Khiláfat. This was in the same year that Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه qualified from Deoband. Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمة الله عليه stationed Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه in Jalálábád, where Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه established the madrasah, Miftáhul-Ulúm, and a khánqáh where sálikín stayed for their self-rectification. Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه passed away in Jalálábád on the 17th Jamádul-Ulá 1413 A.H., corresponding to the 14th November 1992.

Volume One: Rajab 1435/May 2014
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Published by:
Al-Namal Publications
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Brixton, 2019
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ISBN:

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FOREWORD TO THE PRESENT BOOK: FOR FRIENDS, VOLUME TWO

Alhamdulilláh, through the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of our Sheikhرحمة الله عليه, this second volume of "For Friends" is being prepared. The response from various quarters on receiving the first volume has been very encouraging. We make du'á that this volume is also found to be of benefit.

Many have given valuable feed-backs and useful suggestions. May Alláh Ta'álá reward them all.

It must be pointed out again that what you have in your hands is the result of the efforts of several people. Not taking into account those who assisted in the publication o the original copies, a number of people have assisted in the proof-reading of the English text, the corrections of the Arabic áyát and ahádíth, the designing of the covers, the formatting and layout of of the contents, the printing and freighting, and other efforts required. May Alláh Ta'álá reward them all.

BOOKLET NUMBER THIRTEEN

Rabí-Uth-Thání – July 2001

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Booklet Number Thirteen is now ready, once again solely though the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of our Sheikh رحمة الله عليه.

In the first part of the majlis that has been translated for this edition, our Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه, discusses some important principles of Sulúk. The beginner may not fully comprehend the issues discussed but our Hadhrat's

رحمة الله عليه advice is to imbibe the lessons so that when the sálik progresses along the path of Sulúk and encounters these issues, he will be aware of them and overcome the obstacles.

That is not to say that this majlis is meant only for that sálik who has progressed quite far. Further on Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه discusses many important issues with supporting Qur'án Sharíf áyát. Like every majlis of our Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه this majlis contains something for everyone.

Among the techniques that our Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه employed was one of asking rhetorical questions. He would put forward questions where the answers were obvious. In this way those who were present were made to think for themselves what the logical conclusions of a series of statements were. In this particular majlis this technique has been used extensively. Hadhrat's رحمة الله عليه purpose was to draw out from the listeners certain points instead of these being spoon-fed to them.

May Alláh Ta'álá give us all the taufíq to practise according to these teachings.

Dr.I.M.

بِسْمِ اللَّـهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sahib رحمة الله عليه *in Jalálábád, India, on the 1st September, 1986, corresponding to the 26th Zil Hajj 1406.]*

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحْمَدَهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

Effect of the Qur'án Sharíf

The kuffár and mushrikín leaders of Makkah and others used to call the blessed speech of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم "magic". People still use the term "magic" for the speeches of some people, saying that "the lecture was magical," meaning that there was a bewitching attraction in it and a very profound effect – "What a magical talk it was!"

In the same way the kuffár of Makkah also called the Qur'án Sharíf "magical". It had the effect of striking a blow to the nafs so that nafsániyet moves out and diminishes continuously. The nafs becomes corpse-like – like a dead body. Subhánalláh! What bullet-wound can be better than that? A bullet from a pistol is a physical shot; this is a metaphysical shot. The former causes destruction of the body; the latter causes destruction of the nafs.

If the physical body is destroyed what remains? Nothing. The reason is the grounds on which a'mál are performed are dependent on life – for one to perform deeds it is necessary that one should be alive – life being the vehicle for a'mál. So, when there is no life left then no deeds can be performed and thus there is no progress, because progress is dependent on the performance of deeds. There are no deeds performed after death. If there are no deeds then how can there be progress?

Importance of taubah & istighfár (repentance)

In the state of being alive the reparation, the remedy for shortcomings is achieved by making istighfár. However in the ákhirat istighfár will be of no use and will not compensate for any evil deeds and sins committed while alive.

So consider life – which is a vehicle – to be a great bounty. Consider it a great bounty for attaining greater qurb and for increasing one's ta'alluq with Alláh Ta'álá. Each breath is of great value. For this reason also that as long as there is breath there is hope: as long as one is alive there is scope for reparation as well as for progress. One can compensate for shortcomings. The remedial process for shortcomings is reciting istighfár and also making istighfár with heartfelt contrition. Making istighfár is in itself a hasanah. By resorting to istighfár evil deeds become annulled.

Similar to istighfár, other 'ibádat are also hasanah. In this situation there is no sign of any istighfár yet the hasanah is in the deed performed and evil is annulled. Alláh Ta'álá states:

إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ

Verily hasanát (good deeds) annul evil deeds. (S.11.114.)

In other words, hasanát destroys evil; hasanát shoves it away; hasanát washes away evil; hasanát tells evil to take a walk, as if to say: "I am now here, so there is no room for you here!" Because of the evil prompting of the nafs the body may have done some evil, so this evil is told: "There is no work for you to do here now." Take the example of a dark room: a candle was lit and the candle tells the darkness: "There is no work for you to do here now. Go! Get out!"

Do you understand? Do you understand my Urdú? Whenever there are newcomers from foreign countries I tend to enquire whether they understand.

Alláh Ta'álá has created poisons & antidotes

Alláh Ta'álá has created certain effects. With regard to poisons of a material nature Alláh Ta'álá has created appropriate antidotes. Alláh Ta'álá has created opposites in this world. If a doctor gives some medication to a patient and the medication creates a harmful effect in the body then the doctor will administer an antidote that will counteract the ill-effect of the first medication.

In a very similar manner, to an even greater extent, Alláh Ta'álá has kept (at the spiritual level) a substitute and a muslih – that thing that will cause isláh, that thing that will eradicate an evil. Sin is a poison and taubah is the antidote for it. To what a degree has Alláh Ta'álá not poured his bounties on us! Together with creating physical poisons Alláh Ta'álá has created the antidotes for these very poisons. Similarly with internal poisons, the bátiní poisons, which take the form of sins, Alláh Ta'álá has shown us the antidotes for these as well. Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "I know that Man will ingest poisons, at times in error, at times deliberately. Should it so happen, I have created antidotes. These should then be taken. In a similar way I know that, despite having brought ímán on Me, you are going to commit acts contrary to My orders. When you do this there will even be some among you who will become terrified at this, with tears flowing from the eyes, weeping with a heart filled with contrition, lamenting: 'I have gone against the orders of my Creator! What to do now? What can I do now? Oh, what's to be done now?' I know you from before – I am 'Álimul-

ghaib (Knower of the unseen). It is in answer to that person who cries out: 'What can I do?' that I have created taubah!"

Do you understand?

For such a person!

Not everybody will make taubah

Because not everybody makes taubah. Did Shaitán make taubah? We all know that he did not. So, Alláh Ta'álá has laid down a condition – for such a person! Because, although taubah has been created, not everybody is going to make use of taubah. Take poison again: although poison has been created, not everybody is going to ingest poison. Alláh Ta'álá is the Creator of everything: He has created poison and has also made it known that this is poison; and He has also created the antidote and made it known that this is its antidote. In a similar way there are sins, which are spiritual poisons, but together with these taubah has been created. What a great bounty has Alláh Ta'álá not blessed us with! He is saying: "There will also be such people who will perpetrate deeds contrary to My orders, but they will be terrified at their actions – they will be agitated and distressed. Until they have not made amends for this, until they have not remedied it they will not rest with ease. They will not know what its atonement is and in what way to remedy it. And I have muhabbat for him. So, I have shown beforehand that I have created taubah." Taubah is for such a person – not for everybody.

Committing sin is not for everybody

To commit sin is also not for everybody. There are a great number of the creation who abstain completely from sin. So much so that one will hear people say: "That person is born a walí!" Have you not heard such comments? Yes, you have. "What can one say about him? Subhánalláh! Wáh! Wáh! He is a walí from birth!" Do you see that? This very point I was making that such a person has not gone near any sin throughout his whole life.

However, being human, it can happen that a person falls into sin. This person is now agitated and distressed. He will be terrified. What to do now?

If he has not been shown how to make reparations he may commit suicide! He thinks: "What is the purpose of my living? I have become Shaitán!" Thus, Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "I have shown that the means of reparation does exist for such people: it is istighfár."

So, to commit sin is not for everybody, but sin has been created – sin has been created and taubah has also been created. However, to commit sin is not for everybody and taubah is not for every sinner.

The Ambiyá عليهم السلام were human, but there is just no question of them having committed sins. And it is not necessary even to mention the angels – the reason being that they just do not possess that other faculty (a nafs) that can result in mèlán (inclination/attraction) occurring. The Ambiyá عليهم السلام do possess this quality of having mèlán because they are human and Alláh Ta'álá has kept in them human instincts as well. The capacity to become angry is kept in a nabí عليه السلام. He possesses nafsání mèlán and passions (shahwat) as well. If these were not kept in him how would he have children? The Ambiyá عليهم السلام did have children, is that not so? To beget children is possible if they approached their wives. And approaching their wives is possible only if they had mèlán. So, a nabí عليه السلام will possess mèlán and shahwat.

Having mèlán is not a sin – inappropriate use of mèlán is!

Yes, however, these qualities will not be utilised inappropriately. The mèlán will not be used in an inappropriate situation. But mèlán there will be. So, we come to learn that mèlán, in itself – per se – is not a sin. Even a nabí عليه السلام is not exempt from mèlán. Mèlán may appear in a nabí عليه السلام even before nikáh.

Do you understand what I am saying? I am a tálibul-'ilm. These are points to listen to attentively and pondered on and not to be passed over superficially.

Mèlán and a nabí

Mèlán occurred to a nabí عليه السلام as well before the nikáh before the marriage ceremony. This was the case with Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام. The incident is as follows: Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام was all alone in Jannat. Alláh

Ta'álá created a companion for him, Hadhrat Hawwá عليه السلام. Alláh Ta'álá had Himself created Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام so what would be the beauty of the companion? Hadhrat Hawwá عليه السلام was created from Hadhrat Ádam's عليه السلام left side and she sat on his left.

Can you imagine the extreme beauty and charm of Hadhrat Hawwá عليه السلام – how charming she was, how fine and delicate her skin was, how much allure there must have been in her form? Any daughters born to her would also have these attractive qualities.

When Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام turned to his left and saw Hadhrat Hawwá عليه السلام he extended his hand towards her. No nikáh had been performed as yet. This is in the nature of man – his fitrat. Suddenly an alarm rang in his heart: "Hén! Hén! Hén!" This alarm, this "Hén! Hén! Hén!" rang out and Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام halted.

So, this mèlán is an instinctive, natural quality. However, to follow through is contrary to the Sharí'ah. It is now clear that merely for mèlán to exist is no sin. After the mèlán, when intention and resolve enter in this direction, then there is pollution. There is no defilement in mere mèlán. When the person chooses to ignore the contamination and persists with his resolve then will come association.

Do you understand my words?

The boy will now link-up with the girl and the girl will now link-up with the boy. Now a deliberate intention is a factor. They will write to one another. They will speak with one another. However, if the person's attention is drawn to this mèlán and he is forewarned then he will be on guard. Then there will be no question of contamination and if there is no contamination then there is no question of association either.

Do you understand my talk?

This discourse of mine is directed to the tálibáne-Haqq – the seekers of Truth. This discourse is directed to those who are really sincere and truthful seekers of their isláh. I mention this because one does not know nowadays who comes and just sits down in the majlis. Even then, such a person is not bereft of benefit, provided that has no enmity and no hasad. It is not so that only those who are devotees will benefit. No. Even those who sit with an open mind will definitely benefit, provided that they do

not have enmity like Shaitán developed enmity, like Abu Jahl and Abu Lahb developed enmity against Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم and so forth.

Ploy of Shaitán is to disturb the mind

One should be completely open-minded and not deliberately think and ponder out and bring to mind criticisms, otherwise Shaitán will come to one. Should such thoughts come to mind unpremeditated and one realises that they are contrary to Haqq then immediately become "mindless" of them and develop disgust for them. Alláh Ta'álá states in the Qur'án Sharíf:

إِنَّمَا النَّجْوٰى مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ لِيَحْزُنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا

Evil whispering is only from Shaitán that he may cause grief to those who believe. (S.58.10.)

This is an absolutely amazing áyet! Just as you folk whisper amongst yourselves privately, just so Alláh Ta'álá states that from his side Shaitán whispers – he instils wasáwis, khatarát, khiyálát and hadíthun-nafs (doubts, scattered thoughts and anxieties) – to the mu'min and with the mu'min, with the object of causing him to fall into despondency and sorrow. Remember this very well.

Do you understand? Shaitán is not visible but he whispers secretly. If you remember this is what he did to Imám Rází رحمة الله عليه. Imám Rází رحمة الله عليه was a great 'álim. Despite this Shaitán still whispered into his heart, very stealthily instilling doubts into his heart. Yet Shaitán cannot be seen. Alláh Ta'álá is acquainting us with Shaitán. Alláh Ta'álá is stating that Shaitán desires to throw the mu'min into gloom and grief. So, when these warnings have become firmly embedded in one's heart, will one still pay any attention to wasáwis, to stray thoughts and doubts? Of course not. It is Shaitán's objective that the mu'min should not be happy but should be despondent and grieving. The reason is that Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام was a mu'min and it was through this mu'min, Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام that he developed enmity. The enmity progressed to the extent of hostility.

Do not debate with two types

That is why it is written that one should not converse with two types of people; do not have discussions with two types of people; do not debate or contend with two kinds of people: one is that person who is thick-skulled and stupid; the other is that person who has enmity towards you.

As to the one who is an idiot, he will not understand what you are saying, so why waste your precious time?

As to the one who harbours enmity, his animosity will increase and he will now have it in for you and harm you. You have now brought trouble on yourself. Why did you debate with him? His hostility has increased. When it becomes apparent and it is proven that the person is not a tálib – not a seeker of Haqq – and he has even a bit of enmity in him, then never have discussions with such a person.

Dá'wah: learn the rules

Huzúr Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم came verily for tablígh. This was his compulsory duty. One carrying out this duty is called a Pegambar, a Rasúl. Despite this read through Surah Abasa. Learn it off.

The background to this Surah is that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was busy with dá'wah – inviting others to tauhíd, which is fundamental to Islám. He was giving dá'wah to the Quraish kuffár, the leaders of the Quraish. However, they were not tálib. They were not seekers. They were in opposition, not in accord. Despite this Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was giving them dá'wah. This was the purpose for Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم coming, to give dá'wah.

Hadhrat Abdulláh Ibn Makhtúm رضى الله تعالى عنه was a blind sahábí. He approached Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم at that very moment to enquire about a matter concerning a detail of Dín which he found it necessary to be elucidated on. He made an attempt to ask. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم disapproved of his intrusion and did not answer him and turned his face away. From Alláh Ta'álá an áyet was revealed:

عَبَسَ وَتَوَلّٰىٓ ۙ﴿١﴾ أَنْ جَآءَهُ الْأَعْمٰى ﴿٢﴾

He groaned and turned his face away because the blind man came to him.

(S.80.1-2.)

Take note that the address is on an impersonal note: There is a person. A

blind person came to him and asked him a question so he turned his face away and displeasure was exhibited on his face.

Like I said: Take note that an impersonal form of address has been adopted. Alláh Ta'álá wanted to conceal the incident concerning Huzúr Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم. Others must not think that Alláh Ta'álá was displeased with His beloved Habíb صلى الله عليه وسلم. Alláh Ta'álá did not state "*abasat*". Alláh Ta'álá did not state "*watawal-lat*". Grammatically these direct addresses would imply a reprimand, which the indirect form of address does not contain: There is a person.

Now, how will you know whose isláh will take place and whose isláh will not take place? Alláh Ta'álá states:

وَمَا يُدْرِيْكَ لَعَلَّهٗ يَزَّكّٰٓى ۙ

What could inform you that he might be purified? (S.80.3.)

Whose tazkíyah will take place and whose tazkíyah will not take place?

أَوْ يَذَّكَّرُ فَتَنفَعَهُ الذِّكْرٰى ۝

Or take notice and so the reminder may be of benefit to him? (S.80.4.)

How will you know who will benefit from your talk and who will not? Alláh Ta'álá is stating: "Just see here! I will show you.

The arrogant and the tálib

أَمَّا مَنِ اسْتَغْنٰى ۙ فَأَنْتَ لَهٗ تَصَدّٰى ۝ وَمَا عَلَيْكَ أَلَّا يَزَّكّٰى ۝

As for him who thinks himself independent, you pay attention to him? But you are not to blame if he does not become pure. (S.80.5-7.)

Those who are showing disdain, displaying their arrogance, and are not giving even any thought to your talk, yet you are running after them? It is not permissible to run after these. (Tasaddá-lil-ghair is not já'iz.) It is not permissible to run after the disinterested (ghair) when it is apparent that they are not tálib but will develop greater scorn towards our views and, in their opinion, hold other views to be Haqq in comparison to ours. How will such a people accept our views? We thus understand that one

should not have discussions with those displaying disdain and arrogance. One should speak to those who are tálib. This is basic.

وَأَمَّا مَنْ جَآءَكَ يَسْعٰى ۙ وَهُوَ يَخْشٰى ۙ فَأَنْتَ عَنْهُ تَلَهّٰى ۚ

But as for him who comes running to you and he fears, you give little attention to him. (S.80.7-10.)

And that poor soul, having the fear of Alláh Ta'álá, hastening towards you to enquire about a Díní matter, is shunned by you?

Alláh Ta'álá has shown a principle in this, as if to say: "You صلى الله عليه وسلم have been sent for this very purpose of dá'wah. The issue is just one fine point: You صلى الله عليه وسلم should merely take note as to who is a tálib and who is not a tálib; who has hastened with humility and who is sitting with haughtiness. See to this. Your attitude is understandable, in that your temperament is very gentle, one of great tenderness. You have tremendous compassion within you. It does happen at times, out of extreme affection and immense compassion, a necessary issue is overlooked or, even though it is remembered, yet at a certain point when one is overwhelmed by a different issue facing one, it is forgotten.

"However, the One who is Greater, is emphasizing the point, directing attention to it that these are issues to bear in mind. Otherwise those whose rights have priority will be relegated to the back and those whose rights are secondary will be given priority. Or those who have no rights will be attended to and those who have rights will be left out.

"Also, because of the degree of affection in you temperament, it logically follows that this affection may be overwhelming, so it is necessary for Me to point out with regard to the kuffár:

وَاغْلُظْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ

And be stern with them. (S.66.9.)

Why do you not display anger towards them?

What tremendous degree of affection are you not showing! On the other hand Hadhrat Músá عليه السلام was told to adopt leniency:

فَقُوْلَا لَهٗ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهٗ يَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشٰى ۝

(When the two of you go to Fir'oun) converse with him gently, that perchance he may (enthusiastically) accept your advice or that he may fear. (S.20.44.)

So, as the occasion demands, Alláh Ta'álá will instruct the Nabí صلى الله عليه وسلم and give him the necessary advice. How would we know how to approach which person, when and under what circumstances? Laws and rules have been set down for the future. If these incidents did not occur at that time, how could laws be derived? How would one know how to approach which individual, on what occasion, in which manner? From this one can assess just how great is the necessity for having correct knowledge, especially for a muballígh. A muballígh – one making tablígh – when approaching an individual, needs to have the correct 'ilm to be able to recognise the individual, his temperament, the time and the occasion. It is very essential to attain correct 'ilm. And how essential it is to acquire the sohbat of a muhaqqiq to reach the haqíqat of correct 'ilm. This is the second aspect I have presented to you.

The best of scholars

Thus, talab – quest – is what has been elaborated on by Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. When this is understood then:

نِعْمَ الْفَقِيْهُ اِنِ احْتِيْجَ اِلَيْهِ نَفَعَ وَاِنْ تُغْنِي عَنْهُ اَغْنٰى

The best faqíh is he who benefits that individual who comes with talab-e-sádiq and with humility. A ne'mal faqíh – one who has a deep/ correct understanding of Dín – is that person who, when people disclose their needs to him as far as Dín is concerned, benefits them. And those people who display indifference then he himself should also adopt an indifferent stance. This is a basic principle – an usúl. This is the duty of a faqíh. This is the function of an excellent scholar (behtarín faqíh).

Mèlán and nature – mèlán and the Sharí'ah

This topic has come in incidentally. We were discussing mèlán. If there was no such thing as mèlán then Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام would not have had mèlán. Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام was created by Alláh Ta'álá with the status of a

nabí, even though the manifestation of the nabúwat came only afterwards. However, the station of nabúwat was kept in him. Despite this, before the nikáh, Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام saw an exquisitely beautiful individual, one created from his rib, sitting nearby and he developed mèlán towards her. With the development of the mèlán he even stretched out his hand towards her. This mèlán was not a prohibited instinct, it was not forbidden, it was not banned, but there was an impediment present in acting according to this mèlán. So, mèlán is the work of the temperament and safeguarding oneself is the work of the Sharí'ah. Mèlán in itself is not forbidden. If there was no Sharí'ah then acting on mèlán would have been permissible because it is part of one's nature, part of one's temperament. However, the Sharí'ah has come and placed a barrier. Otherwise the lineage would have been spoilt – the genealogy would not be pure. So nikáh comes in-between.

It is thus apparent that mèlán comes to a nabí عليه السلام as well. So – are you listening attentively? – if mèlán occurs in a walí then will he be terrified? No, he will be very happy! This is a very deep aspect this faqír is stating! Yes, a walí will be extremely happy because – Alhamdulilláh! – even in this attribute I am in accord with a nabí عليه السلام.

Do you understand the point or not?

The work of tablígh is very easy, but to have these qualities within oneself to do tablígh is very difficult. As much as the degree of similarity with a nabí عليه السلام increases to that degree will one's perfection (kamál) increase. How can that person be human who has no mèlán in him whatsoever? Kamál is this that one has mèlán and "Oh! Oh!" intervenes and one stops oneself. The Sharí'ah with its "Oh! Oh!" intervenes and one halts as Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام halted. After all, whose progeny are we? The mu'min, progeny whose is he? He is the progeny of Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام. And the kuffár, whose progeny are they? Biologically they are also the progeny of Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام but are they?

Being a son and being one's ahl

Hadhrat Núh عليه السلام had appealed to Alláh Ta'álá with regard to his son: "This is my son and he is drowning! O Alláh! It is Your promise that You will save my children and save them from punishment." Alláh Ta'álá replied:

"The promise pertains to your children, but is he your child?

قَالَ يٰنُوْحُ إِنَّهٗ لَيْسَ مِنْ أَهْلِكَ ۚ

He said: "O Núh! He is not of your ahl." (S.11.46)

This is stated in the eloquent style of the Qur'án Sharíf. Alláh Ta'álá has placed in it a very high and subtle point. Alláh Ta'álá did not say: "Laisa min auládik – he is not of your children." He did not say: "Laisa min waladik – he is not your boy." He did not say: "Laisa min ibnik – he is not your son." He was his progeny. He was his son. How can it be said that he was not his son?

Do you understand? Sometimes some very fine and subtle points also get mentioned.

Alláh Ta'álá said: "Laisa min ahlik – he is not of your ahl. If he was of your ahl then he would have resembled you. Intrinsically your qualities would have been in him." This is what the term "ahl" actually means.

From "ahl" we also have the word "ahlulláh" – the ahl of Alláh Ta'álá. So, the ahlulláh will have in them the characteristics of Alláh Ta'álá. They have in them the attributes of Alláh Ta'álá. It is not that a walí will not have any ghussah in him. What type of walí is that? A walí should have ghussah within him. But what type of ghussah? Ghussah like that of Alláh Ta'álá!

Do you understand? You honoured visitors have travelled here from quite far away countries. I feel very compassionate towards you, that you have spent so much money in travelling here and have endured the discomfort and difficulties of journeying here.

Limits of ghussah

As I was saying, Alláh Ta'álá also gets angry, is this not so? So, who is saying that this mu'min-bandah should not become angry? Who is saying that he must not express his anger? If ghussah were to disappear completely how would he become angry?

However, it needs to be emphasised that the ghussah should be like that of Alláh Ta'álá. Your anger should be the same as that of Alláh Ta'álá for the reason that you are of the ahlulláh. And since you are of the ahlulláh you should have the facility within you of expressing appropriately in a similar

manner that Alláh Ta'álá appropriately expresses His qualities. In other words, check to see if it is the correct occasion to express ghussah or not. Check to see whether you are showing ghussah for your own satisfaction? Are you showing ghussah to cool yourself down? Are you showing ghussah to please yourself? Are you showing ghussah to display your high and mighty status? Are you showing ghussah to humiliate and embarrass the next person? Are you showing ghussah to disgrace him in the eyes of other people?

Alternatively, are you showing ghussah for the protection of the rights of those whose rights are infringed? Are you showing ghussah to protect the rights of those whose tarbiyet you have to make? The ghussah in these latter situations are is not for self-satisfaction, not for cooling down, not for self-glorification, not for displaying one's power and importance among the people. There is no question of ego-boosting – there is no sign of contempt in his attitude. On the contrary, it is to protect him from harm – it is for his tarbiyet that he is being shown ádáb.

Do you understand the point?

Some mu'minín will enter Jahannam

Just see: Alláh Ta'álá will send some mu'minín into Jahannam.

Will this not happen? It will happen. Now, when these mu'minín are sent into Jahannam, will they be sent there out of enmity? No! They will be sent there out of friendliness; they will be sent there out of affection, for the attainment of adab. Alláh Ta'álá will be virtually saying: "You were admonished previously. Why did you not rectify yourself and learn adab while still in the world? Yet, at the time you used to brush it aside saying: 'Illness comes and goes.' Why did you not take a lesson from it? On another occasion an incident took place, blemishing your name and honour. This was also a punishment. Why did you not take a lesson from it? At times you suffered some material loss. Why did you not take a lesson from these losses? The illness was there to bring home a lesson and so, too, were the dishonour and the material losses. So, why did you not derive lessons from these and turn towards Me? Why was there no rujú-ilalláh? Why was your heart not crushed and softened by these events? Those evil deeds that you

committed contrary to My Orders – why did you not discard them? Such brazen impudence? So, now you are being sent to Jahannam for cleansing – ta'díban, tahzíban, ta'alluqan – and not for punishment, not for bringing grief."

Little children are nurtured in this way: If the child is spanked, is it to cause him harm or grief? No. The reason is to teach him manners, to rectify his habits, to make him cultured.

Now do you understand the reality of ghussah? Ghussah has been explained to you. Ghussah is not for personal ends – it is not to satisfy your heart, it is not to exhibit your exalted status, it is not to disgrace others, it is not to bring contempt to others in the eyes of the community. Ghussah exercised in this manner will then be an imitation of Alláh Ta'álá's ghussah.

BUT! Can each and every individual accomplish this? This cannot be achieved until and unless the nafs is not under control. The individual has to control his nafs – his life, his temperament, his self, his ego, his senses. These are different terms used to describe the nafs. Even now some of us have not understood the meaning of the word "nafs"! This nafs has to be controlled to the degree that it does not act inappropriately – that nothing occurs out of place. Akhláqe-razílah are blameworthy (razílah) as long as they are utilised for rizálat (disgraceful ends). What do you understand? And if they are not used for disgraceful acts but for good deeds then they cease to be razílah. Therefore, in outward appearance, the ghussah of one person may appear to be the same as that of the next person's but, in reality, they will be completely different. Alláh Ta'álá also displays ghussah. Thus, every ghussah – in absolute terms – is not harám.

If it were so and ghussah was absolutely harám then how would the huqúqs of the Dín be preserved? How will the rights of others be protected? Whatever Alláh Ta'álá has created is either to ward off harm or to gain some benefit. Ghussah has also been created by Alláh Ta'álá. If ghussah, as an absolute value, was impure, filthy and harám, then why did Alláh Ta'álá create it? Ghussah has also been created to be used on some correct and appropriate occasion. However, it is not an easy task to recognise the correct and appropriate occasion. Even if it turns out to be easy to recognise the correct occasion then too it is not easy to act appropriately, until and

unless the nafs is not under complete control.

These are those special aspects that one has to learn by going to stay with the mashá'ikh, by handing oneself completely over to them. In what manner? In the following manner:

Example of the dhobí washing clothes

For example: Take it that you want to have your dirty clothes washed and you hand these over to the dhobí to wash.

كَثَوْبٍ فِيْ يَدِالْغَسَّالِ

(Entrust yourself over to the mashá'ikh as you entrust) your clothes to the dhobí.

Having entrusted the clothes to the dhobí do you now have any say in the matter of washing? Not in the least! For illustration: You pitch up at the dhobí's house and you see him rubbing your clothes in the faecal pellets of goats. You are shocked. "Arè! Arè! What are you doing to my clothes? I gave my clothes to you to make them pák but here you are defiling them!" The dhobi replies curtly: "Very well. Sir! Here are your kurtas and clothes. Take them back with you. According to your understanding I do not know my work – so why did you bring your clothes to me?" The dhobí is offended. You apologise. "I am truly sorry. I was not aware." He softens at your apology. "Very well. Let me carry on with my work."

At a later stage the dhobí moistens the clothes, wraps them up into a bundle and places them over a fire. With the heat of the fire steam soon rises up from the clothes. You pitch up at this moment. What do you see? Your clothes are on top of a fire and smoke is coming out from them. You are again shocked. "Arè! Arè! What are you doing? Did I give my clothes to you to clean or to set on fire? Look! The fire is burning my clothes!" The dhobí is noticeably irritated. "Very well. Here, take your clothes with you!" You realise your error and you are again apologetic. He relents again.

Later still he takes your clothes to the riverside. He takes your garments one by one and threshes then upon the flat stones in the water. He then spreads out your garments and beats then with a wooden batten. Amazingly, you have to pitch up at that moment! "Arè! Arè!" you shout in shocked

tones. "What are you doing? What are you up to? Are you cleaning my clothes or destroying them? Rascal! This is enough! Each time I see you doing something or other to damage my clothes – rubbing them in some excreta, placing them on a fire and now thrashing them with a batten on some stones!" This time the dhobí is extremely offended. "Take your clothes and go away!" Sensibly, you apologise again. Again he relents and carries on with his work.

In the final stage he is back at home. Having spread your clothes on his table he is busy ironing them with a hot iron, smoothing away the creases. You again pitch up and notice the hot iron on your clothes with steam rising up. "Arè! Arè! You are again burning my clothes!" This time, almost finished with his work, the dhobí ignores you and carries on. His work done, he now hands your clothes over for your inspection. Are the clothes not bright and clean? Are they not spotless and without any creases? Yet you had felt that he was mishandling your clothes – defiling them, burning them and tearing them to shreds with a batten!

So, just as you entrusted your clothes to the dhobí, leaving them in his hands to do as he deemed fit, in the same way you have to entrust yourself to your sheikh, giving yourself into his hands to do with you as he deems fit!

Do you understand the concept? It is important that you do.

Entrusting oneself to one's sheikh

So, having done just that, then there should be an end to your knowledge, an end to your intelligence, an end to your past experiences and an end to your opinion – an end to everything. Then only have you entrusted yourself to your sheikh – it is only then that you have given him control over yourself. Thereafter do not take work from your own knowledge, your own intelligence, your own experiences and your own opinion. In comparison to that of your sheikh, what is the value of your knowledge, intelligence, experiences and opinion? Then see what happens! Otherwise nothing will happen. At every point you will object to the sheikh's treatment – the clothes will not get cleaned! If you are unable to comply, then take the clothes away in the same state that you brought them!

كَثَوْبٍ فِيْ يَدِالْغَسَّالِ

(Entrust yourself over to the mashá'ikh as you) entrust your clothes to the dhobí.

Say day is day and night is night? No, no, no! What does Sheikh Sádí say? He says: "Do not say so. If it is day and the sheikh says: 'What a dark night it is! Is it night or not?' one's response should be: 'Yes, Huzúr! The stars are twinkling.' Then will one achieve something!"

This is not something that everybody will understand. Those who have only book knowledge will object. To them we say: "Let the matter rest. You just stick to your books! These subtleties are not for you!"

This is mánwiyát (esoteric). Mánwiyát is one thing and the opposite (hessiyát) is another.

The example of a glow-worm

Do you know what a firefly, a glow-worm is? Have you seen one?

It is an insect that emits a light from its body. The light is visible only at night. During the day the light is not visible. When we were little children we used to catch these and place them in our topís which would then be seen to be flashing as the glow-worms emitted light through the very thin material. The light is not visible during the day because of the brightness of the sun. So you comment: "What luminescence has it not got!" The next person sees nothing. "Where is the light?" "The light is in it. Look at it at the proper time and you will see it flashing brightly."

So, the sheikh is speaking metaphorically. It is day-time, but kept in it imperceptibly is the darkness of night with the twinkling of stars. In order to reach up to this level of understanding one requires a very high degree of faith and confidence in one's sheikh. That is why one should select for oneself a sheikh only after a very, very careful scrutiny.

It is also for this reason that Hadhratwálá mentioned something very important to me. At times, when we were alone, he used to mention some very intricate points to me. Once – there was nobody else there at the time – one such point he made was: "Procrastinate in making bai'at of molvís, but hasten in making bai'at of the ordinary folk. In this way work

will progress." This was told to me. What is the reason? A molví has a great deal of knowledge. However...

اَلْعِلْمُ حِجَابُ الْاَكْبَرِ

Knowledge is a greater (major) veil.

Everything is impermissible in his eyes: "This is ná-já'iz. That is ná-já'iz. This is ná-já'iz. That is ná-já'iz." This is now his life!

Attaining perfection (kamál)

We were discussing mèlán. The muntahí (accomplished) having gone through a process of mujáhadah and riyádhat, passes through a stage where it appears that there is no mèlán in his temperament. The same thing happens to one who goes for hajj.

When he is in Makkah and he stands in front of the Khánah-Ka'bah he is so affected that he has no mèlán. Surrounding him are pretty women from Egypt, from Iran, from Turkey, from Indonesia, etc. – all these beautiful women are present there – yet he has no mèlán in him. He has lost all power. He feels that he has become impotent. How will he now fulfil conjugal relations when he goes back home? This is a condition that can occur there.

Similarly, in Sulúk the person is like one held within the Khánah-Ka'bah. When the path of tarbiyet is tread in the correct manner, the person methodically making his isláh, he reaches an intermediary stage when it appears as if he is impotent. There is no mèlán in him whatsoever. That person who has traversed this path will understand this very well. Then, as he progresses to the stage of accomplishment (intihá) and becomes a muntahí, this is when, in a manner of speaking, his Sulúk reaches maturity, so his physical maturity also returns! That is, his mèlán reappears. There is mèlán in his temperament again. This event frightens him. He is shocked: "What is this happening to me?" But the sheikh is there to console him: Do not worry: now you are kámil. Before this stage you still had a deficiency in you. Being without mèlán was a deficiency. Mèlán is a natural instinct. It was completely subdued within you, for whatever reason. The cause of its suppression has been removed and the original, natural attribute is

now manifesting itself again. Now you are an imitation of a nabí! The more one imitates a nabí in whatever way so, proportionately, does one's kamál increases. A walí is subordinate to a nabí.

Thus, what kamál is it to leave one's wife, to leave one's children, to leave one's work, to leave off associating with others, leave one's town and go and stay in the wilderness? What achievement is this? This is not in keeping with imitating a nabí. Whereas we are all bound to imitate Nabí Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم.

So, a time does come occasionally during the course of the isláh of one's nafs, during the course of making an abundance of zikr that one feels like leaving everything and stay in the wilderness. However, halt! Stop and look to see if this is in imitation of a nabí. It is not. Therefore, forcefully stop and assess. One should imitate a nabí. This is a sign of kamál.

Yes, if that time arrives that the nabí عليه السلام had predicted that your ímán is in danger and it becomes difficult to save your ímán then take a lamb and place it on your shoulder and go and stay in the crevices of the mountains. And if it is not so, O Sálik, having undertaken mujáhadah and riyádhat, having listened to people swearing you, being used to light beatings, stay among the people bearing all these abuses! To repeat: Stay where? Stay among the people and tolerate all their abuse.

Did the sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم not bear the abuse hurled at them? Yes, for 13 years they bore patiently the abuse and persecution of others – such abuse and persecution as one will rarely encounter these days.

Tolerating abuse: become sábir and subúr

So, stay among the people and tolerate their abuse. Do not take it badly but be hopeful of being granted elevated stages by Alláh Ta'álá. Do not become merely sábir (patient) but become subúr (have forbearance). Try and attain the maqám of subúr. It is to attain this maqám that the sheikh behaves as he does. To the tálibe sádiq, one who is pákkah and sacchá, he appears to scold without reason. The sálik feels: "I have not done anything wrong. I am being scolded for nothing." The sheikh may even order him: "Get out! Be away! Don't show your face here again!" He may even give the sálik a thump on his back.

If you unable to bear even your sheik thumping you, as indicated by your response: “What did I do wrong? What did I do wrong?” how will you endure abuse from others? Your response should have been: “Definitely, I did something wrong! Yes, definitely I am at fault even though I am not aware of my error!” This thump on the back is better than showing affection.

Do you understand the point?

This why this ta’lím is taking place. However, that sheikh that will thump the muríd on his back does not exist anymore. The point is: When you are unable to tolerate the thump that the sheikh gives you on your back, how will you tolerate the slaps of others when you go outside? The sheikh desires that, at whatever time, whatever difficulty, whatever dishonour befalls you from others, you should consider it to be a draft of sweet halva and swallow it. You should not even think twice about it. This is isláh. That is why the sheikh behaves as he does. The sheikh will immediately gauge how much faith and confidence you have in him. When there is inner resentment and a feeling of being insulted at the words of the sheikh and which shows in the expression on his face, the sheikh will have noted it. “Oho! There is still a major deficiency in him.”

It is no easy task to remove what is inside one, part of one’s nature, part of one’s temperament. I am speaking about mèlán. For mèlán not to exhibit itself inappropriately is no ordinary achievement. It is a great feat.

The mu’min has been created to make jihád until the time of his death. This jihád – the jihád against the nafs – is there all the time, for twenty four hours of every day! The physical jihád against the kuffár and mushrikín is an incidental occurrence. Also, that jihád against the kuffár and mushrikín is the fara’ (offshoot, subsidiary development) of this jihád against the nafs. The basic jihád is against the nafs.

Just as these bodily garments – this kurtah, izár and lungí – are the fara’ of the garments of taqwá; and taqwá is connected to the heart, as has been explained previously. If this basic taqwá is not present one will remove the kurtah, the izár or lungí and roam about naked. Inappropriate action. These garments that we are wearing on our bodies are the fara’ of the orders of the Sharí’ah. If there were no orders in the Sharí’ah people would have

walked around naked. And the orders of the Sharí'ah are connected to taqwá of the heart. So, the garments of the body are the fara' of taqwá of the heart; and taqwá of the heart, in turn, is the garment of ímán. So, therefore, that person who does not have the garment of taqwá of the heart, his ímán is naked. And when his ímán becomes naked, bereft of the garment of taqwá then, at times on certain occasions, he becomes physically naked as well – his kurtah will come off and his izár will come off.

Do you understand?

That is why during ghussah he has become misplaced and inappropriate and his actions will then be inappropriate. He has no taqwá. Yes, if his actions are appropriate then he will take off his kurtah in appropriate circumstances and his izár will come off in appropriate circumstances.

When you go for a ghusl to the bathroom you will keep your kurtah and izár on you? Congratulations! Shábásh! What type of ghusl will that be? When you prepare for ghusl you will have your clothes on. These garments will then be taken off. If not, then why did Hadhrat Músá عليه السلام take off his kurtah and place them on a rock when he went to make ghusl? Do you remember the qissah? But this fellow here considers himself to be a great muttaqí and, therefore, wears a lungí even when he makes ghusl though he is in the bathroom. Ofo! What is the state of your taqwá? Did not Hadhrat Músá عليه السلام take off his clothes? Yes, we have permission to take off our clothes when making ghusl.

Do you understand?

This is the answer found in the Hadíth Sharíf: When somebody – Alláh forbid! Alláh forbid! – is involved in the act of ziná then the ímán of this mu'min leaves his heart and hovers above his head like a bird. It is as if at that moment he is not a mu'min. I said: "As if." He has ímán, superficial, without quality. It is dry, empty and insipid. That ímán that was full of exhilaration has disappeared. That garment of taqwá that he had has been removed. The protection has been removed and now he is suffering. The ímán that remains is dry, tasteless, without flavour, without enjoyment. This is what the Hadíth Sharíf is implying. It is not implying that ímán has left him completely and that he has become a káfir.

The garments inside, the inner clothes, consist of taqwá

وَلِبَاسُ التَّقْوٰى ۙ ذٰلِكَ خَيْرٌ ؕ

Clothes of taqwá – these are the best! (S.7.26.)

The best garments are garments of taqwá. The garments on our body are branches of this taqwá. The day this inner taqwá is not present, the clothes on the body will also come off.

Today the talk, the lesson is on mèlán. On this mèlán returning, O kámil, you are reaching completion, so, do not have the misconception that you are retrogressing; do not think: "Ofo! I am going backwards! My bad qualities are returning. All my mujáhadah and riyádhat have been for nothing." If you fall into this trap then the whole of Sulúk and Tasawwuf will become bitter and repulsive. All mujáhadah and riyádhat will become loathsome. Take note that only now have you become kámil. This is called the phase of Mujáhadah-Tháníah. Can you hear me? In the terminology of Tasawwuf it is called Mujáhadah-Tháníah. Now he has reached completion. He had not reached completion previous to this.

When he has passed through this phase of Mujáhadah-Tháníah then, alhamdulilláh, he will be on the edge of the sea. Then, the day he decides to proceed into the sea he will be on the sea and in it! Saving himself from sinning, avoiding transgressions of the Sharí'ah, adopting complete and perfect taqwá till his death, he will be a perfect example of the áyet:

يَاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوااللهَ حَقَّ تُقٰتِهٖ وَلَا تَمُوْتُنَّ اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ۝

O you who believe! Fear Alláh with fear due to Him and die not except that you be Muslims. (S.3.102.)

Two types of taqwá

It is apparent that the order for the mu'min to adopt taqwá refers to two types of taqwá. The one is that which is merely associated with ímán. The taqwá that is demanded in the above áyet is that of abstaining from major and minor sins and also what is doubtful, till the time of one's death. This is real taqwá that has been demanded in the áyet quoted above: Complete obedience in one's bátin – that is, connected to one's character – and one's záhir.

Mèlán is a natural instinct, part of one's temperament. Kamál is this there is mèlán and one's resolve is not included in it, otherwise there is contamination. Once there is contamination with one's resolve then will come the next step, that there is communication. Once this happens then the person has gone out of the sphere of kamále-ímán. The next step is the desire to fulfil one's passion and then scheming in various ways to do this. Opposing all this is termed Mujáhadah-Tháníah.

As I was saying that the moment this mèlán occurs the person is assailed by numerous doubts and stray thoughts: these wasáwis, takhayulát, khawátir and hadíthun-nafs – doubts, scattered thoughts and anxieties – are all from Shaitán:

إِنَّمَا النَّجْوٰى مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ لِيَحْزُنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا

Evil whispering is only from Shaitán that he may cause grief to those who believe. (S.58.10.)

Alláh Ta'álá is saying that all these wasáwis and khiyálát are from Shaitán in order to cast the mu'min into grief and despondency. Further on Alláh Ta'álá states:

وَعَلَى اللهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝

In Alláh let the believers place their trust. (S.3.160.)

Combating Shaitán

The mu'min should pay no attention to this. Shaitán has no power over the mu'min that he should be influenced by Shaitán. Why? The reason is that the shán of a mu'min is such that he does not place his trust on anything besides Alláh Ta'álá – he places his complete trust only on Alláh Ta'álá. This is the demands of his being a mu'min. His reliance is fully on Alláh Ta'álá. So, why should he become despondent? On the contrary, his response will be challengingly put to Shaitán: "Go ahead! Throw more wasáwis! Go on, throw more – I am not bothered. I will not become despondent." If he does become despondent then Shaitán becomes happy and Alláh Ta'álá becomes displeased. Remember very well: to become grieved and despondent at the arrival of wasáwis is to make Shaitán happy and Rahmán unhappy. This is

proven from the above áyet. According to the laws of mantíq (logic), which you must have studied in several kitábs, that he wishes to make Shaitán happy by remaining despondent and he wishes to displease Rahmán by not coming out of his despondency.

So, be happy and not despondent at the arrival of wasáwis. Why? Because Alláh Ta'álá wants you to be happy. Will Shaitán then trouble you? Will he bring doubts into you mind? Will he instil wasáwis and scattered thoughts into your mind? Will he play around with your mind? Will he make your temperament turn again and again to the swarm of anxieties racing through your mind? Of course not! So, become firmly grounded while you are here in order that you do not become a plaything for Shaitán. He should not make a plaything of your actions, he should not make a plaything of your deeds and he should not even make a plaything of thoughts in your mind. In the manner shown above. Even if, after this, wasáwis do come, just ignore them. This áyet has also in it the remedy for wasáwis. Say to yourself: "Why should I become despondent, thereby making Shaitán happy? And thereby bring about the displeasure of Alláh Ta'álá? Why should I become despondent? I will not become despondent!"

By becoming despondent will a person's mood not be one of depression? The sálik who becomes despondent will definitely be depressed. Consequently the pleasure of meeting with associates, the pleasure of eating, the pleasure of sleeping, the pleasure of studying kitábs, the pleasure of going for lessons, the pleasure of attending classes and listening with enthusiasm – all these come to an abrupt end. This was the very objective Shaitán had. His objective has been achieved. All his necessary duties will be affected adversely. He will not want to go to work. When customers come he will not speak with them in the happy manner that he should. He is depressed. To understand this take the situation where a worldly problem causes one to become depressed: there is some financial loss or some form of disgrace befalls one or some relative passes away, one naturally becomes depressed. One's work is affected and one is unable to sleep restfully. In a similar manner the sálik also becomes depressed as a result of all the wasáwis that engulf him.

He is now troubled by doubts on the subjects of Tauhíd or on Qiyámat or

Existence. These thoughts make him depressed. He even comes to question himself: “Have I not become a káfir?” Then something else will bother him: “Shaitán is a káfir and will remain a káfir till the end. Why is this so?” These thoughts now trouble him endlessly. What concern is it of yours? Have you any right to interfere in this affair? Knowingly and intentionally have you any say in the matter? Knowingly and intentionally your ímán is intact. This other matter is without any intent, without any say – what is your role in it?

A person wades into the river. Suddenly the current flings him over. Unable to fight the current, he shouts for help: “Help! Help! I’m drowning! I’m drowning!” With these words on his lips he drowns. The Kalimah of *“Lá-iláha illalláhu Muhammadur Rasúlulláh”* صلى الله عليه وسلم was not on his lips but the words “Help! Help! I’m drowning! I’m drowning!” were on his lips. Did he die a mu’min or not? The answer is that he died a mu’min. The reason is that neither on his tongue neither in his heart was there any action deliberately negating ímán! He did not deliberately bring any thought contrary to ímán into his heart and he did not deliberately bring anything contrary to ímán to his tongue, but called out for help. His death is with ímán. As long as one does not deliberately bring thoughts negating ímán to one’s heart or say anything with the tongue contrary to ímán one’s ímán is intact and ímán does not slip away.

Do you understand? This mas’alah has been clarified, with the taufíq of Alláh Ta’álá.

As I was saying, these are issues that the súfís encounter very much. If they do not possess knowledge of the haqá’iq and masá’il of Tasawwuf and they do not possess the knowledge of the haqíqat of ímán then they will have major problems. These issues involving wasáwis, khatarát and hadíthun-nafs (doubts, scattered thoughts and anxieties) assail the súfís tremendously, as well as issues concerning pákí/ná-pákí. The súfís are not troubled by issues concerning halál and harám – these are straightforward issues to them and they are not troubled by wasáwis in these matters. If they are afflicted by wasáwis then these are to do with pákí/ná-pákí or with khiyálát. It is important that these issues are sorted out completely.

Issues pertaining to pákí and ná-pákí

Examples of issues of pákí and ná-pákí afflicting the súfís:

He has gone to the toilet and is making istinjá. Three jugs of water he has used to wash himself and the namáz has been completed in the masjid but he still feels he is ná-pák. Then, while still in the toilet, he is concerned about drops of urine. "Oh! There's another drop coming and another and another." He is not getting up. Namáz time is nearly gone but he is not getting out of the toilet! O Bondsman of Alláh Ta'álá, after having finished urinating, shake off the last drop, use the mud-clod to wipe yourself dry and get out from there! Get out, make wudhú and make your namáz.

Now, having washed himself with water, his izár or lungí is slightly damp. If not damp he should wet it. I shall repeat: He should deliberately wet his izár or lungí so that when he senses wetness he should tell himself: "It was wet from the water already. It is not a drop of urine dribbling out. It is just the damp edge touching." Otherwise what will happen is as follows: "Oh! Oh! Another drop of urine has come out!" He then rushes back to wash himself and his garment and make fresh wudhú. Who has him in his grip? Yes, Shaitán!

Do you understand? Do these problems not present themselves? Yes, they do.

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه told Khwájásáhib: "I notice that when you go to the toilet you take rather long. What do you do that it takes you so long?" Khwájásáhib replied: "Hadhrat, what can I say? The reason it takes me so long is that I feel that drops of urine keep on coming and I have to keep on squeezing until every last drop comes out." Hadhratwálá said: "Is that so? It is a cow's udder is it? As long as one squeezes the udder of a cow milk will keep on dripping out. If you keep on squeezing drops will come out. What nonsense is this! What you do is wipe yourself dry with a mud clod as soon as you have urinated and come out." This was the remedy for his problem. This is one set of problems that the súfís encounter a great deal, wasáwis concerning pákí/ná-pákí.

The other set of problems concern wasáwis about issues like Tauhíd, risálat, Qiyámat, hisáb-kitáb (reckoning), conditions in the grave – Shaitán keeps on heaping wasáwis on the súfí with regard to these issues. Today

the remedy is being given to you. The remedy for these wasáwis is being presented to you. The remedy for mèlán is being presented to you. A majlis should encompass a variety of subjects. I presented an áyet as proof:

إِنَّمَا النَّجْوٰى مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ لِيَحْزُنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا

Evil whispering is only from Shaitán that he may cause grief to those who believe. (S.58.10.)

Shaitán instils wasáwis into the hearts of the mu'minín in order to make them despondent. He instils wasáwis, khatarát and khiyálát – some worry or other is instilled all the time. Immediately tell yourself that this is from Shaitán. Do not become unduly depressed because Rahmán is refuting this. One has to make Rahmán happy, not Shaitán. When this thought comes to mind then one's despondency should disappear and these thoughts from Shaitán should also disappear. The mind should be clear now and Shaitán cannot play around with the mind. There should be sukún. Peace and order (aman) prevails and anarchy and chaos (bid-amaní) disappears.

Aman (peace and order) and bid-amaní (anarchy and chaos)

This is another aspect that is being brought to your notice. Do you understand what is anarchy and chaos? This anarchy and chaos is very widespread these days, not only in Hindustán but all over, throughout the whole world. If you look at America, at China, at Japan, at Russia, at Turkey, at Iran, at Iraq – in fact, wherever you look you will see anarchy and chaos, not only in Hindustán. If you cannot see it ask those who are aware of this. Bid-amaní is spread throughout the world.

Why is bid-amaní widespread? The reason is that bid-amaní is rampant within you. Let me repeat what I have just said: this bid-amaní, this chaos and anarchy is widespread throughout the world and this is the external manifestation of the chaos and anarchy that is rampant within you.

When this bid-amaní disappears from within all of you then the bid-amaní from the world will also disappear. As long as this bid-amaní is within each of you in a collective manner bid-amaní will be prevalent. You may try whatever other methods you wish – hold up your banners and organise marches, have demonstrations, hold conferences and pass resolutions, have

lectures galore – but bid-amaní will not disappear.

Do you understand? This bid-amaní will not go away. What do lectures achieve? What do demonstration and marches achieve? With banners in your hands go around shouting "Náre-takbír," what will it achieve? Nothing. Aman will not come because bid-amaní is in every individual

The external bid-amaní that is spread all over is an offshoot of the internal bid-amaní in the individual. As I have discussed just now, that the garments of the body are a manifestation of the taqwá of the heart. When the taqwá of the heart disappears the clothes from the body will also come off. The outer is a manifestation of the inner. Similarly, the aman that is inside will manifest externally. When this inner aman goes, the aman on the outside also goes and bid-amaní presents itself.

The worst form of bid-amaní is kufr. The most odious type of bid-amaní is kufr. Kufr predominates in the world whereas ímán is scanty. The kuffár are in the majority in the world and the mu'minín are in the minority. Kufr is bid-amaní and therefore, the kuffár being in the majority, there is no question of aman becoming established. Let us go a step further: With the existence of bid-amaní of kufr the imperceptible bid-amaní kufrí and mushrikí has entered into us as well. Bid-amaní has now been enhanced and given dignity! Darkness is now overpowering and overwhelming.

You brothers may not have seen that age, but we have several times seen the raging of tremendous storms, not once but several times. At times, just before Asr, while the sun is still shining a severe storm would blow up. The whole sky would be filled with thick clouds which would cover the sun completely. It would become so dark that one could not even see one's fingers in front of one. Yet, the sun is shining beyond the clouds! However, it has become so dark that the day is darker than night itself!

Do you understand? Bid-amaní has become widespread: the sun is shining – the light of aman is there – but the darkness of bid-amaní has overpowered this light as at the times of storms, and the whole world is covered by darkness!

In a similar way there is bid-amaní within us and this bid-amaní has enveloped our entire inner being and has overpowered the light within us. So, there is no question of radiance and aman manifestation themselves.

Another aspect: there is shierk-e-khafí and shierk-e-jalí (minor and major shierk). Minor shierk has joined up with major shierk, resulting in darkness existing in all the four corners of the earth. These are the effects of bid-amaní; this is how it has spread. There is no question of aman prevailing.

That is why nothing will be achieved by lectures and speeches, by conferences, by demonstrations, by strikes, by banner-waving and sit-downs in front of various institutions. All these methods are completely and absolutely contrary to the orders of Alláh Ta'álá. Adopting these contrary methods and hoping for peace and order...? It will never happen! The reason is that the rules laid down by Ahkamul-Hákimín (Alláh Ta'álá) for attaining peace and order are different. So, there is no question of aman prevailing if methods are adopted contrary to these rules. In essence, aman has to come within oneself first.

There is a fourth aspect I wish to deal with. The above was a discussion concerning aman-e-ám (peace and order in the world). What I wish to stress is: be concerned about yourself. Have fikr for yourself. Do not concern yourself about others. Do not make fikr for others. Shift your gaze away from fikr about others and concentrate on yourself. Where have you fallen into in the fikr for others? Worry about yourself. That is, establish aman within yourself. With the intention of establishing aman within yourself on an individual basis, get to work. Whatever traits that are causing bid-amaní within yourself, remove them.

Take takabbur – if this is present within one will this not cause bid-amaní? Take ghussah – is this not a cause of bid-amaní? Take hasad one for another – is this not a cause of bid-amaní? Take kínah in one's heart one for another – is this not a cause of bid-amaní? To have hirs and tama' for others' possessions – is this not a cause of bid-amaní? To have the desire within one that the honour and wealth that others possess should be destroyed – is this not a cause of bid-amaní? Takabbur, ghussah, hasad, etc., etc., – will all these qualities cause aman or bid-amaní?

Take this example: I made ghíbat about you – I said something unpleasant about you to somebody. This conversation of mine has now reached your ears. Having heard this will you have affection for me or enmity? If you had muhabbat for me will it remain or disappear? Is there now aman or

bid-amaní? There is now bid-amaní. The question of aman prevailing does not arise at all. This is something that is within me: takabbur, ghussah, hirs, tama’, hasad, ghíbat, nafrat, bugz and a host of other traits. If all these exist within me, will there be aman? No question of it!

Elections entail animosity

Take voting. What is it if it is not animosity? Two individuals confront one another. The one stands for election as a candidate in opposition to another. Will the one not criticise the other? Will the one not take money or give money to get as many votes as possible? Will the one not try to belittle the other? Will the result not be enmity instead of muhabbat? And hearts are not pure. Take it that an effort has to be made and an effort was made. The one has been successful and is elected as the leader. The previous mayor has been defeated. What happens now? The ones that did not vote for the successful candidate and voted for the one who lost, are now in danger. What happens next is that there is a fight over the allocation of land. Legal cases are instituted for the return of land allotted previously and so forth. Will there be friendship or animosity? Is there aman or bid-amaní?

What should have happened at the time of the contest was the following: The attitude should have been: “If I win well and good. If I lose, it will not make difference to my friendship.” There should have been no change in the muhabbat the one has for the other. There should have been no attempts to cause harm to the other person. There should have been no moves to humiliate and disgrace the other person. There should be no hounding of the other person. But this is exactly what we see. You villagers who are present here – do you not bear me out in what I am saying? Of course you do. The ones who did not vote for the one elected are put into difficulties.

Why is all this? It is because the illnesses that should not have been there are present: Takabbur, hasad, kínah, etc. He thus wants to retaliate and cause him difficulties. The one wants to provoke the other and cause him problems.

General peace and order – aman-e-ám

When these illnesses are eliminated from within then you will see its external manifestation: sukún and aman, will establish themselves plainly, fully and completely. Therefore, why are you pursuing aman-e-ám when this is beyond your ikhtiyár? However, as for yourself you can fulfil the haqq that is incumbent on yourself, that you can tell yourself: "The causes of bid-amaní that dwell within me I shall remove." The terms applied to this process are Sulúk and Tasawwuf. You can tell yourself: "This takabbur that is within me I shall remove. What have I to do with the whole universe? I have not taken responsibility for the whole world."

لَّسْتَ عَلَيْهِم بِمُصَيْطِرٍ ۙ

You are not at all a warder over them. (S88.22.)

Therefore, on an individual basis establish aman within yourselves. Bas! – That is sufficient. The proof of this is clearly indicated in another áyet of the Qur'án Sharíf. Alláh Ta'álá addresses each one on an individual basis:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۖ لَا يَضُرُّكُم مَّن ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ۚ

O you who believe! You have charge of your own souls. He who has gone astray cannot injure you if you are rightly guided. (S.5.105.)

Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "Why are you worried about others? Worry about yourself. What is this you are saying: 'Our society is such.'" Alláh Ta'álá is negating this misconception. He is Knower of the unseen ('Álimul-ghaib) and He knew people will say: "What can I say? Regretfully, our society is like this. What is there to say? Hadhrat, our environment is like this. What can we do?" You also must have heard people saying this. "Society is such. The circumstances are such. What can we do?" In negating this misconception Alláh Ta'álá is saying in the Qur'án Sharíf that "society" is with you. The environment is what you make of it. Just what are you saying?

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۖ

O you who believe! You have charge of your own souls

O you who believe! The whole world has not been made your responsibility. You have not been made the policeman of the world. Worry about yourself.

Do not worry about others. It should not happen that in safeguarding the next person's bundle of goods yours get stolen or destroyed! You protect your own bundle. The world is full of deception, especially nowadays. Did you not hear of what happened? Let me relate to you:

Deception – an incident concerning looking after another's parcel

This poor person was sitting in the train. Another person carrying a bundle, came and placed the bundle down next to him and said: "I'll leave my bag here. I'm going to buy my train ticket. I'll be back in a moment." He left to buy a ticket. Here the train started moving and he was not back.

Listen carefully. We also used to listen to Hadhratwálá. In it is a lesson on how to live a life with caution.

The train departed without the second person who had left his bundle with the first person. Shortly afterwards the ticket inspector arrived. "Tickets please! Tickets please!" The passengers produced their tickets for him to check. He came to this person to check his ticket as well. He saw the bundle on the floor and asked: "What's this?" This person answered: "Sir, another person came and left it here, saying that he had still to buy his ticket. I don't know what happened to him." The ticket inspector spoke sarcastically: "Oh, you don't know what happened to him? But this bundle is by you! Open it!" he ordered commandingly. This person opened the bundle. What was inside? The body of a murdered man! Wrapped in some cloth was the dismembered corpse of a murdered man! This person was arrested.

Did he not take responsibility for the bundle which the other person had left behind? Was he not deceived by the other person who said that he was just going to buy a train ticket?

Do you understand? These are the times we are living in. These are times of great fitnah. This is an age of massive deception, of tremendous tricksters. Our naïvety is being exploited. The response of the first person should have been: "I do not take responsibility for it. Place your bundle elsewhere. Go, put it some other place. I'm not keeping it by me."

We come to know that a great deal of affection and compassion shown in inappropriate places are going to cause tremendous harm. This explains

what "environment" is! A person shows undue compassion, he shows softness. He makes friends inappropriately. The next thing is "his bundle is missing"! This is the way we express it in our local Urdú. In protecting the next person's bundle, your bundle is swiped.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ

O you who believe! You have charge of your own souls

Do not do such a thing that, in protecting the other person's bundle, yours goes missing. This is the plain and simple translation of the áyet.

لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَّنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ؕ

He who has gone astray cannot injure you if you are rightly guided.
(S.5.105.)

When you know the straight path – when you know, with firmness and conviction, the road you have to travel to get to your destination – then will you be deceived by anybody's deception? Then, even if the whole world was to be astray and you are on guidance, the whole universe will not cause you any harm. It is sufficient that you concern yourself about your own condition. Leave aside the environment and society. Keep a close scrutiny on yourself. Have fikr for yourself – be concerned about yourself. You have not been created for the concern of the whole universe. What will be the result when you have the fikr for others? The fikr for yourself will not remain. You will suffer some harm. Haqq Bárí Ta'álá is 'Álimul-ghaib – He is aware of the passage of fifteen hundred years and its consequences. He has shown that "society" is nothing; "environment" is nothing. "Society" is what you are; "environment" is what you are. Look at yourself.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنفُسَكُمْ ۚ

Mount your nafs. "Alá" denotes mounting something. One will hear it said: "The burden of debt is on me. I have such a big burden of debt on me that I cannot bear it!" This is not a physical burden but it is a manner of speaking. The burden that each has to bear is different.

So, the "alá" denotes mounting. Does one not mount a horse? The áyet commands us: "O mu'min, mount your nafs." Each one should mount his

nafs, his tabiyet, his temperament. From the grammatical point of view when the collective term is utilised in confrontation with another it denotes "each by itself".

Those of you sitting here and who have studied grammar will know this.

This means that each one of you should mount your nafs, that is, gain control of it, like a well-trained horse, that with a slight tap with one's heel the horse will jump over the ditch. Keep a tight control of the reins. Why? Because, at times even a trained horse will become frisky. Similarly, this nafs which you have mounted, may also become frisky occasionally. Therefore, do not give it free rein, do not be neglectful, do not let go of the reins. This is what "alá" means. Be mounted and in full control. Do not be neglectful of it.

You will have understood from this áyet that there is no reason for saying: "What can I say? Society is such. The environment is like that. I am working in an office with a variety of other people. Some are rude, some like to tease, others are playful and so forth. What can I do? Society is such. The environment is such." Is this not heard from people?

Another example: "I have been admitted to the madrasah, but the majority of students are such, the environment is such. The environment of the room in which I am staying is such. What can I say? The environment is such."

I am trying to make you understand. The environment is not something to be frightened about. Look at the environment as you would at your mother. Should one be terrified of one's mother? Staying with one's mother will a person become corrupted? At times she may have slapped you, not out of enmity but for the sake of disciplining. She may have shouted at you, reprimanded you, but not out of enmity. A little while later does she not call out to you lovingly?

How should students behave?

I am trying to make you children understand. You are staying in your room in the "Boarding" together with others. An argument and fight may occur. Children tend to argue and fight. You are slapped. Now, think of the persons

in your room as your mother. So, who has hit you? Your mother! So, what is there to be concerned about? Do not retaliate, do not fight back. Just accept it. In fact, think of the advice Hadhrat Luqmán عليه السلام gave his son. It is in the Qur'án Sharíf. He told his son: "Just see, when somebody slaps you on the face, do not turn your face away." By this he meant that by not turning your face away you should invite him to slap you again! Do not fight back. Each one is your mother. If this is every student's attitude, will there be fights? Will there fisticuffs and beatings? Obviously not.

If there are fights then it shows that the environment is not good – there is no aman within yourselves and that is the reason for the arguments and fights. If you had entered the madrasah with aman or imbibed aman within you after entering, then there would be no fights and arguments. There will be splendour in the room and an end to fighting and quarrelling.

How should muridín behave?

What of those who come to stay in the khánqáh? After coming to stay in the khánqáh there is just no question of feeling upset at anybody telling you off. Why have you come here? You have come for this very reason that: "Even if somebody were to take a basketful of faeces and throw it on me I will not take it badly!" This is the intention with which you left and came here to stay in the khánqáh for your isláh and tarbiyet. This is the resolve and determination with which you came that: "Even if somebody were to take a basketful of faeces and throw it on me I will not ghussah overtake me!" This is the objective with which you came here. And if you had no such notion in your mind, this is the ta'lím that is now placed in front of you that if filth was thrown on you why should you feel upset? If you are feeling upset then it means that there is still some deficiency in you! Your isláh has not been achieved. There is still some deficiency. The sheikh will remove this deficiency so that, when you leave the khánqáh and go back home to your neighbourhood, to your town, to your country, whenever anybody does any such thing which is contrary to your temperament, there will no possibility of anger overtaking you. This is what the sheikh wants to mold you into and send you back, seeing you have come as a tálibe sádiq. When the internal environment is corrected then the outside environment

will also be corrected. Remember: the whole world has not been made your responsibility. Nobody will influence you because you have corrected your environment.

This is what Alláh Ta'álá is saying. I am merely conveying His proclamation to you:

لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ مَّنْ ضَلَّ إِذَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ ۚ

He who has gone astray cannot injure you if you are rightly guided.
(S.5.105.)

When this is the case the whole universe can be astray but nobody will be able to corrupt you.

The example of the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم

The internal environment of the sahábah-kirám رضی الله تعالی عنهم was extremely firm. Therefore the external environment was not frightening to them. As is well-known there were approximately a hundred and twenty-four thousand sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم that Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم left behind when he passed away. Also, as is well-known, there were approximately one hundred and twenty four thousand Ambiyá علیهم السلام that came. Thus each sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه is similar to each nabí of theirs. And why not? Each sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه was an 'álim and the 'ulemá are comparable to the Ambiyá علیهم السلام of the Baní Isrá'íl. Thus all the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم are comparable to the Ambiyá علیهم السلام of the Baní Isrá'íl.

Now look at their environment, what were its challenges: Diamonds were strewn in front of them in the battlefields on the occasion of jihád. They were tempted with gold placed along their paths that they should fall prey to hirs and tama'.

As part of their scheming, the Christians hand-picked exquisitely beautiful and tantalizing young Christian girls who were given goods to sell and sent among the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم mujáhidín with specific instructions from the Pope to try and seduce them in a plot to demoralise the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم. If the girls were in any way interfered with, the Christians knew the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم would be defeated. If the girls were not interfered with and not even looked at, then who could overcome such a nation?

Both aspects were assessed by the Christians – zar and zan (women and wealth). The sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم did not lift their eyes at the gold and at the best of diamonds strewn in front of them. Wealth is something one naturally inclines to, yet the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم were indifferent to it. The Christians said to themselves: "These people seem to be very firm." Now we come to zan: The Pope then instructed that beautiful, hand-picked girls should be given goods to sell and sent among the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم. The girls flaunted themselves among the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم but no one lifted his eyes at them. The reason is that their environment was corrected. To use the metaphor above: They took the environment to be their "mother" so what fear is there? Is it permissible to look at one's mother with evil intent?

Time and again the girls passed between them but nobody looked. Finally, the girls went back to report back their failure. The Pope assessed the position: First was the zar – the material wealth with which they were tempted; second was the zan – the women with whom they were tempted. The sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم did not lift their eyes at either. He concluded that the Christians would never be successful in overcoming the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم. These are the very two things, zan and zar! It was apparent to the Pope that the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم were not fighting for land (zamín) to fill their material greed and desires but were fighting for the land for the Dín of Alláh Ta'álá.

Do you understand? Going for jihád to conquer this land, this sultanate, this kingdom, was not for the sake of hirs of the land, not for greed of the land but for the purity of the land! Their gaze was neither on zar; nor was their gaze on zan, nor was their gaze on land, so how could anybody overcome them? That is the reason why the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم were successful. Why? The basis was that they had taken their inner environment with them. They feared nothing from the external environment. They had full control over their nafs; they had full domination over their temperaments. This is Tasawwuf! This is Sulúk – an important part of the Sharí'at, a delicate and exquisite part of the Sharí'at.

This is the reason for which you honoured guests have journeyed here.

Du'á

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us all the taufíq to remove the qualities of hirs and desires for zar, zan and zamín from within, that our inner condition, our inner environment becomes corrected; that aman be established within ourselves and outside as well. May Alláh Ta'álá grant sahíh taufíq.

آمِيْن يَا رَبَّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ وَصَلَّى اللهُ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَاٰلِهٖ وَسَلَّمَ

فِيْ اَمَانَ الله

Khudá Háfiz.

BOOKLET NUMBER FOURTEEN
Shábán 1423 – October 2002

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh , For Friends Booklet Number Fourteen is being presented to you. This, again, is solely through the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of our Sheikh, Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه.

While preparing this translation, the thought came to mind as to the correctness and appropriateness of choosing this particular majlis for publication. In other words, the past issues had covered most of the basic concepts dealing with isláh and the chances are that, from now onwards, many aspects may be repeated and duplicated. It so happened that we came across some statements of Hadhratjíرحمة الله عليه, noted down by Muftí Rashid Ahmed Mewátí Sáhib in his recent compilation, "Wáq'íát Masíhul-Ummat," which are worth repeating here. Hadhratjíرحمة الله عليه stated:

"Many discourses have taken place (and) many talks have been listened to. Now it only remains for nafs and Shaitán to be given a kick! Are you listening? With the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Hadhrat,

various topics have been discussed, alhamdulilláh, and have reached your ears. Now it is necessary to merely boot out nafs and Shaitán. nafs is the King of Evil and Shaitán is his Prime Minister. Is this (advice) not sufficient as a discourse, or not yet?"

In these few words Hadhratjíرحمة الله عليه has given us the crux of the whole discourse. Whatever else follows is merely to guide us and strengthen us in pursuing these objectives.

In this majlis that has been translated, Hadhratjíرحمة الله عليه discusses some important aspects of Sulúk that the serious tálib needs to be acquainted with. May Alláh Ta'álá give us all the taufíq arzání to do this.

Dr. I.M

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sahib*رحمة الله عليه *in Jalálábád, India, on the 8th January, 1989, corresponding to the 28th Rabí-ul Awwal 1409.]*

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحْمَدَهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

TAQWÁ

Tazkíyah and tazakká – purification

In grammar and syntax there are two chapters: One is tafíl and the other is tafá'ul. After tafíl comes tafá'ul. The difference is in the root word. In a similar manner one finds tazkíyah and tazakká. Tazkíyah is in the category of tafíl and tazakká is in the category of tafá'ul. Alláh Ta'álá states at one place in the Qur'án Sharíf:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۙ

Successful are those who have made tazkíyah of their nafs. (S.91.9)

At another place Alláh Ta'álá has stated:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكّىٰ ۙ وَذَكَرَاسْمَ رَبِّهٖ فَصَلّٰى ؕ

Successful are those whose tazkíyah has taken place and who have made the zikr of the name of their Rabb and have then made salát. (S.87.14-15)

From this it is apparent that tazkíyah takes place by making zikr and performing namáz. Alláh Ta'álá has mentioned both zikr and namáz together and has mentioned both after tazakká: waza karasma Rabbihí fasallá.

And if a person is making zikr and performing namáz as well, but his tazkíyah is not taking place, then these actions have as their bases the coveting of dunyá – the effects of these are part of the love of dunyá:

بَلْ تُؤْثِرُوْنَ الْحَيٰوةَ الدُّنْيَا ۫ۖ

But you desire dunyá (S.87.16.)

Ikhlás and nifáq – sincerity hypocrisy

People come and just sit here, but one should assess one's niyet as well. It is based on this niyet that – from the side of Alláh Ta'álá – results will accrue. Otherwise, one will remain where one is. It is even possible that one may retrogress: Initially, there was ikhlás; now there is nifáq. Initially, he had good 'aqídah; now he has developed bid-'aqídah. So, why should such a person come and sit here? Most probably there is some expediency. Remember: If this nifáq is not turned (into ikhlás) this nifáq will be openly revealed finally.

Some are C.I.Ds.

Some are C.I.Ds as well. Do C.I.Ds exist or do the nott they exist? Yes, they are to be found all over. To recognise them is difficult. One also finds such C.I.Ds who are not appointed by the government, but they are C.I.Ds. Just see: those munáfiqín who attended the gatherings of Huzúr Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم – were they appointed by the government? Of course not! They became C.I.Ds by their own will. If they noticed, in their opinion, what were any shortcomings in anybody, they would tell others. They would publicise these. The shortcomings that these C.I.Ds used to narrate to

others, in reality, were not shortcomings. In their eyes, however, these were shortcomings because they were munáfiqín. The reason is that they had no i'tiqád and 'aqídah in their temperaments. They used to publicise such matters which, superficially, were apparently contrary to justice whereas, viewing the matter in-depth, there were many considerations and also wisdom in them. There were many such incidents.

An incident showing wisdom distorted by the munáfiqín

One such incident is narrated:

Huzúr Akram's صلى الله عليه وسلم majlis was in progress. The place was full. The majlis was fully attended. Just then the Ashábe-Badarín *[veterans who fought in the Battle of Badr]* came. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, out of consideration for the Ashábe-Badarín, requested some of the sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم to sit closer together. Some he told: "You have listened to quite a few talks. Now give the Ashábe-Badarín an opportunity." The devoted sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم immediately obeyed and stood up and went away. The munáfiqín found an ideal opportunity to criticise this action. "What justice is this that those who were seated from beforehand are removed and newcomers are given their places?" At this, Alláh Ta'álá revealed the following áyet:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا إِذَا قِيْلَ لَكُمْ تَفَسَّحُوْا فِي الْمَجٰلِسِ فَافْسَحُوْا يَفْسَحِ اللهُ لَكُمْ ۚ وَإِذَا
قِيْلَ انْشُزُوْا فَانْشُزُوْا يَرْفَعِ اللهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِيْنَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ ۚ

O you who believe! When it is said unto you: 'Make space in your assemblies', then make space; Alláh will make space for you (in the hereafter). And when it is said: 'Rise up', then rise up; Alláh will exalt those who believe among you and those who are vouchsafed knowledge, in high ranks. And Alláh is aware of whatsoever you work. (S.58.11.)

In this incident Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had displayed the utmost wisdom and discretion for the following reasons: It is a rational rule that in a situation where there is no room in a gathering, the rule of "sunáwib-fil-istfádah" – taking turns in attaining benefit – will be applied, that the first gathering is terminated so that a second gathering be given an opportunity to benefit. Thus, there was no fault in this action, but because of the

hypocrisy, this very wise action appeared to be unjust to the munáfiqín who publicised it to others. So, had they become C.I.Ds or not?

We come to understand from this that there are also C.I.Ds attending a majlis. They will tell others that today's majlis had such and such a deficiency in it, whereas this is not the case. However, people accept the superficial very quickly, because they do not know the reality behind it.

Take this example: A particular incident has been related from two different angles. The sheikh narrates it from one aspect. Somebody else has heard the other version and he feels that the sheikh has made a mistake in his description of the incident, whereas this is not the case. The sheikh is relating the incident based on his knowledge.

Now, there may be this other person who may have heard the other version or may have read another version in some kitáb, so he goes around telling people that the story is not the way that the sheikh had related it, but is different and even shows the kitáb. But this is no proof of the falsity of the sheikh's statements, because the incident has been related in several ways.

In the same way, a portion of an áyet comes to the lips and not the full áyet. This C.I.D then goes around saying that the full áyet is thus. This person is an element of the C.I.D. He is a C.I.D in himself, but not appointed on behalf of the government.

This is a new perspective. Even then, I speak with caution. I do not speak on mere conjectures. At times, I am convinced of something, but then too I exercise caution, because my memory is much weaker, whereas my memory used to be excellent. When I was studying at Dárul Ulúm (Deoband) I used to do revision of the kitábs in this manner: I used to close my eyes and then visualise that this particular subject runs from this page to this particular page; that this other subject extends from this page to this particular page; that such and such scholar has this to say; the other scholar has that to say; the school of thought of this person is this; and the school of thought of that person is that, etc. Now my retentive memory has weakened and that is why I speak haltingly and hesitatingly.

Three activities required for tazkíyah: tiláwat, zikr & salát

To continue on the topic of tazkíyah:

Sháh Abdul Azíz Sáhib رحمة الله عليه saw Hadhrat Alí رضی الله تعالی عنهم in a dream and asked. “What was the method of Sulúk and tazkíyah in your era?” Hadhrat Alí رضی الله تعالی عنهم replied. “In our age Sulúk and tazkíyah took place by means of three activities: tiláwat, zikr and salát.”

Now we see only zikr – there is an abundance of zikr – whereas the following áyet mentions all three:

اُتْلُ مَآ أُوْحِيَ إِلَيْكَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَأَقِمِ الصَّلٰوةَ ۖ إِنَّ الصَّلٰوةَ تَنْهٰى عَنِ الْفَحْشَآءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ ۗ وَلَذِكْرُ اللهِ أَكْبَرُ ۗ

Recite that which has been revealed to you of the Book and establish worship. Lo! Worship preserves from lewdness and iniquity, but verily remembrance of Alláh is greatest. (S.29.45.)

Thus, for tazkíyah, all three are necessary. Now there is an abundance of zikr, but there are shortcomings in tiláwat and iqámatis-salát. In essence, for Sulúk – that is, to develop qurbe-Iláhí – there is need for two things: continuous obedience (dawáme-tá’at) [to the Sharí’at] and an abundance of zikr (kathrate-zikr). Now, in obedience there should be continuity, but as far as zikr is concerned, there should be abundance, but continuity is not a necessity. The reason is that there is just no question of one being outside the scope of tá’at at any time, on any occasion and under any circumstances: when engaged in conversation there is tá’at; when looking at somebody there is tá’at; when silent there is tá’at. In activity there is tá’at and in tranquillity there is also tá’at. There is just no question of being free of tá’at. So, as far as tá’at is concerned, there is continuity.

However, in zikr there is no continuity. Under normal circumstances, continuity is impossible. When one is occupied in some activity and absorbed in it then normally the zikr will terminate – but zikr will be embedded in the heart. The continuity of obedience mentioned above is the effect of this zikr embedded in the heart, termed zikre-qalbí. Yes, what is embedded in the heart is the basic remembrance.

Ímán and its demands

Take ímán: Basically, ímán is composed of tasdíqe-qalbí and the iqrár-bil-lisán – conviction and confirmation in the heart and attesting verbally the Kalimah-Tayyibah. The verbalising (iqrár-bil-lisán) is the interpretation of the conviction and confirmation of what is in the heart (tasdíqe-qalbí.) This verbal attestation is not a continuous process. Only when somebody asks, will the person recite:

لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللهُ مُحَمَّدٌرَّسُوْلُ اللهِ

But ímán is embedded in the heart all the time.

An áyet comes to mind. Let me recite it, in case I forget it:

وَأَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوٰى

(Alláh) has fixed taqwá in their hearts. (S.48.26)

This is proof of the statement that taqwá is situated and settled in the heart. A grammatical analysis of the áyet brings forth the following explanation: What were the sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم like previously and what have they now become? Previously they were prepared to fight and kill whenever anything happened to antagonise their temperament. But now they were such that, despite the kuffár laying down very severe conditions, they subdued themselves completely in front of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. The reason is that Alláh Ta'álá had embedded in their hearts kalimatat-taqwá. Grammatically, both are genitive. So: "Kalimah" is interpreted by the word "taqwá". When the word "Kalimah" is used, what comes to mind? When somebody is told to recite the Kalimah, he does not recite the Fourth Kalimah, obviously. No. He will recite the Kalimah-Tayyibah:

لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللهُ مُحَمَّدٌرَّسُوْلُ اللهِ

What is the reality of Kalimah-Tayyibah? It is the following: That Záte-Bárí Ta'álá's attributes are absolutely perfect and free (pure) of any faults whatsoever; and that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has the attribute of risálat (that is, all the attributes of being the Messenger of Alláh Ta'álá). This is the reality of the Kalimah-Tayyibah.

The reality of taqwá

The question now arises: What is the demand of this Kalimah-Tayyibah? What is its requirement? Its demand is taqwá. And what is the reality of taqwá? The requirement of taqwá is continuous obedience (dawáme-tá'at.)

Do you understand the sequence?

O you students! Ay-yuhat-tulláb! When you have adopted the Kalimah – which is in the position of leadership – then adopt taqwá as well. That is: obey the Commands, because obeying the Commands is dawáme-tá'at. In "alzamahum kalimatat taqwá" the word "Kalimah" gives the implication of zikr and the word "taqwá" has been shown to be "dawáme-tá'at". It is thus apparent that the effect of the Kalimah is taqwá, which entails dawáme-tá'at.

So, with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh (Hadhratwálá, Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمة الله عليه) it has been proven that both dawáme-tá'at and kathrate-zikr are objectives in themselves. By "dawáme-tá'at" is meant punctuality and regularity with a'mále-záhirah and a'mále-bátinah (external and internal deeds); and by kathrate-zikr is meant that zikr should be made in abundance by the tongue on an on-going basis. When the opportunity presents itself, immediately commence with zikr.

By a'mále bátinah is meant the eradication of the akhláqe-razílah; and the establishment and permanent entrenching of the akhláqe-hamídah. The "eradication" of the akhláqe-razílah is, in actual fact, a lessening and subjugation, which is close to elimination.

For example: If we take the recitation of the Qur'án Sharíf and we take the word "majráhá" when a similar type of diminution takes place, it is recited as "mahrehá," the original vowel – á – changes but some slight hint of the original still remains. However, the objective as far as a'mále-bátinah is concerned, is attaining the akhláqe-hamídah on an established and permanent basis.

Zikr – direct and indirect

In the category of zikr are included tiláwat of the Qur'án Sharíf and all those azkár besides tiláwat. At times this zikr is direct and at times it is indirect. If we were to include the indirect forms of zikr also as zikr itself,

then we can say that there should be permanence in zikr as well. The basis for saying this is the Hadíth Sharíf that says:

كُلُّ مُطِيْعٍ لِلّٰهِ فَهُوَذَاكِرٌ

Every obedient servant is one making zikr.

On the general, wider meaning of this Hadíth Sharíf, one can state that permanent zikr is also an objective.

What is meant by indirect zikr? It is the following: Whichever act or deed, at whichever time, that Alláh Ta'álá has commanded us to carry out, to stick to it within the boundaries and rules, with ikhlás. To adhere to this is also an objective. Thus, when both direct and indirect zikr are generally applicable, then it is apparent that dawáme-zikr is also an objective. So, both dawáme-zikr and dawáme-tá'at are objectives. However, there is this difference that dawáme-tá'at is an objective in its direct form, whereas dawáme-zikr is an overall objective, whether it is in its direct form or indirect form.

Zikr – setting priorities

When one is involved in some tá'at – when in that condition where one is occupied by a particular deed – there will occur in one's heart a lessening of one's attention towards Alláh Ta'álá. On such occasions precedence will be given to concentration on the performance of the deed. The reason for this is the following rule: When two tasks present themselves at the same time and one is unable to delay either one of the two, then the more important task will be given preference. Proof of this is to be found in the statement of Hadhrat Umar رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ:

"I work out the strategy of my army and I am in namáz."

Two 'ibádat confront Hadhrat Umar Fárúq رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ: Firstly, to perform namáz with full concentration – there can be no doubt that this is 'ibádat – and, secondly, to work out a strategy for the army. This is also 'ibádat because alá-kalimatulláh (elevating the Kalimah of Alláh Ta'álá), when confronting the kuffár, is dependent on being victorious and is normally dependent on giving the army a strategy for battle. Thus, working out a

battle strategy is also ’ibádat. As the army had already been dispatched to fight, now in namáz, his mind drifted to this task. So, two ’ibádat presented themselves simultaneously – performance of namáz with full concentration and working out a military strategy – with the latter being more important at that moment in time. In carrying out the official duties of running the state, Hadhrat Umar رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ did not find the time to work out his military strategy, which task required tranquillity and peace of mind. This he attained while performing namáz, which was necessary and important. This is the reason for him giving priority to this task.

In a similar manner, zikre-qalbí and concentration in tá’at, are both ’ibádat, but at the time of performing the task at hand, the concentration in one’s zikre-qalbí becomes diminished. It is now over-shadowed and the concentration on the tá’at becomes dominant.

In the same way once Hadhrat Umar رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ was reciting a khutbah. During the course of the recital something unrelated to the topic in the khutbah was said by him. Those listening were surprised and perplexed that, while reciting the khutbah, he was saying: “O Sáriyáh! (Guard yourself at) the mountain! O Sáriyáh! (Guard yourself at) the mountain!”

What had actually happened was the following: Hadhrat Sáriyáh رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ had been dispatched for jihád. At that particular moment in time Hadhrat Umar رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ became aware, through kashf (whereby an unseen event becomes known) that the enemy was about to overwhelm him. Hadhrat Umar رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ called out that he should take a position so that the mountain would protect him from the rear. Hadhrat Umar’s رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ voice reached the ears of the Muslim army by way of a miracle. The army immediately did this and the enemy was repulsed.

Just see, the khutbah was an act of tá’at, such an act of obedience that without the khutbah the Jumu’ah namáz is not valid. Even if the khutbah is read, but is read after the Jumu’ah namáz, then too, the Jumu’ah namáz is still not valid. In this instance Hadhrat Umar رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ inserted an important tá’at into another act of tá’at and did not delay till the completion of the namáz because it was of utmost urgency and importance.

In any case, zikr is generally and in common language, associated with verbal zikr, just as when the Kalimah is mentioned one normally takes it to

refer to the Kalimah-Tayyibah. Similarly, when one mentions zikr, generally and in the eyes of ordinary people, it is considered to be zikre-lisání. And zikre-qalbí is that zikr that is embedded in the heart. The next person is not aware of this condition, but this is the basic zikr. However, at the time of tá'at even zikre-qalbí is diminished. This means that concentration towards it is not maintained. One should not be concerned about this and one should maintain one's concentration towards the tá'at, as has been mentioned just now:

كُلُّ مُطِيْعٍ لِلّٰهِ فَهُوَذَاكِرٌ

Zikr – little equated to a lot

From here I wish to state something else: Some people, because of their involvement in necessary Díní duties or necessary personal duties, are deprived of making an abundance of zikr. They then feel grieved and frustrated that they are unable to make zikr in abundance. To them I convey the good news that their minimal zikr is equivalent to an abundance of zikr of others. This is on the basis of what has been said now that dawáme-tá'at is an indirect form of dawáme-zikr. Similarly, that person involved in necessary Díní and personal duties and who has time for only a minimal amount of zikr, would fall in the category of one making an abundance of zikr.

In case anybody has a doubt as to how a little zikr can be equated with an abundance of zikr, the answer is as follows: When anything is done on a daily basis in a small quantity, over a period of time it accumulates into a big amount. So that little zikr that is made punctually and daily must accumulate into a large amount as well. Can there be any other the result?

Some may have the thought that rather than making a little zikr daily, it is better to sit somewhere for a few days and make an abundance of zikr and then stop. But how can this be termed as abundance? This is the same as sitting down to eat a great amount of food for a few days and then to stop eating for the next three to four days! Will this be eating in abundance? Nothing of the sort! Take another person who eats a little food everyday: Will this eventually amount to a little or a great amount? Obviously, it will

be a great amount. He will remain healthy.

Hadhrat Abdur-Rahmán bin Auf رضی الله تعالی عنه was a wealthy sahábí. Someone asked him: "How did you become so wealthy?" He replied: "In my business I take care that I do not give on credit but I take cash and I take minimal profits. Which kind of business is it that it shows no profit? However, compared to other businessmen, I take a smaller profit and that is why my business flourishes."

So, this small profit, on account of the larger business, becomes great. This is how he became wealthy. What appeared small became big. Take somebody else who is taking big profits. Soon the customers come to realise this. They tell themselves: "Why should we not buy from where the owner is taking small profits? Why pay six paisah when we can buy the same item for four paisah?"

Have you understood this illustration? In the same way the meagre verbal zikr of the occupied tálibe-tazkíyah – the seeker of self-rectification who is very busy with necessary duties – is no less in his thawáb and qurb than that person who is making zikr in abundance. If the rewards are not less then why be grieved? Why have you brought this illness on yourself? There is a saying:

What remedy can there be for the grief brought on by yourself?

One should have faith and confidence on somebody. When one comes to sit in a majlis then the proper and correct manner of sitting is that in which there is complete and full i'timád and i'tiqád. With the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh, if one has proper i'timád and i'tiqád on what I have just narrated, then there will be serenity and tranquillity, otherwise it will be the very same situation:

What remedy can there be for the grief brought on by yourself?

The illness has been self-inflicted.

Do you understand?

As I was saying: Just as is the case with dawáme-tá'at, that the mu'min bandah is at all times in some 'ibádat, it is the same with dawáme-zikr – he is always in zikr, sometimes directly, at other times indirectly.

This discourse is for those sálikín who are sincere and truthful (mukhlis aur sádiq), who are involved in their tazkíyah with ikhlás and sidq. These

individuals become despondent very quickly: "Today I only made zikr one thousand times instead of three thousand times." They continuously ponder over this and become despondent. Of course the proviso is that – seeing you are a tálib – the obstacle is not laziness. It should not be that only laziness prevents you. If that is the case – that laziness is not a factor – then how can there be any question of "a little" or "a lot"? There is no question of "meagre" and "abundance". Sometimes it is diminished and at other times it is abundant; and the amount that is meagre is actually an abundant amount. If this is the case then, in reality, the qurb and thawáb that are attained by abundance, the same qurb and thawáb will be attained by the small amount of zikr.

Do you understand? Maybe not.

Here is an example: On a particular day a person makes tiláwat to the amount of four páras of the Qur'án Sharíf. On another occasion he manages only one párah – he is greatly troubled by flatulence and passing of wind; or he feels rundown even when he lies down; or he is unable to stand or sit due to illness, etc.; and at times his mouth is dry. Yet, he is a tálib. He has a tremendous passion. Now, who is going to console him? For him to console himself is difficult. It is essential for such a person to appoint a dependable person – one on whom he has i'timád and i'tiqád – to advise him, otherwise life is going to become difficult for him.

Just see: If a person wishes to travel somewhere and he is not fully aware and absolutely certain of the route to take, but only has some vague idea, then it is absolutely essential for this traveller to ascertain the correct directions along the route, even though he does not appoint a guide. The person he should ask should be somebody who is well-acquainted with the route and is travelling there. Our traveller should have full confidence in him and ask him from time to time. It is not necessary to appoint him as a guide – that is that one should formally make somebody one's sheikh – but one should have i'timád on somebody and consult him.

Consultation: a rule of Taríqat

That is why it is a mas'alah of Taríqat that, if one's sheikh has passed away and one is a khalífah or sheikh himself – that is, he has been given

permission by the deceased sheikh to make others bai'at – if this khalífah now comes across some problem that causes him anxiety or uneasiness, then he should seek a solution from whatever advice his sheikh may have given (in his lifetime). Despite this, if his problem is not solved and in order to obtain greater reassurance on the matter by consulting somebody, he should consult one of his own Khalifas – one with whom he has some degree of informality and with whom he is comfortable – and sort out his problem. Or he should consult one of his fellow-muríds (pír-bháís). And if he does not find anyone from among these two groups, then he should consult with a Muftí – one who has the same fervour – in that particular worrying affair.

This is the mas'alah. And there should be no hindrance in seeking such a consultation, because hindrances are due to jáh (sense of self-importance; status; conceit), whereas this khalífah has blown jáh away – he has annihilated jáh. If he does feel a constraint and reluctance, then how did he manage to become a khalífah and a sheikh?

Just as there may be a hindrance presenting itself in ulúme-bátinah, similar problems may also arise in ulúme-záhirah, as was the case with Mauláná Muhammad Ya'qúb Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. He was delivering a lesson in Bukhárí Sharíf. While giving the lesson, he got stuck at a particular point. Mauláná was the principal of the institute. He took the kitáb, got up and went to one of the ustáds under him and said: "Mauláná, just have a look at this passage. I seem to have become a bit stuck. Just give me an explanation on it." The mauláná complied, had a look and gave his dissertation. Mauláná Ya'qúb Sáhib رحمة الله عليه went back to his class and told the students: "I went to this mauláná-sáhib for him to explain this passage to me. He has fulfilled the Haqq of this passage very well and his explanation is as follows..."

This incident Mauláná Ya'qúb Sáhib رحمة الله عليه himself repeated often. I heard this incident being related by Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه. How did Mauláná Ya'qúb Sáhib رحمة الله عليه bring himself to seek the assistance of a junior ustád? The reason is that full and complete tazkíyah had taken place. Nowadays there is no such tazkíyah.

The basic root has been eradicated. The basic root and fundamental ill is hubbe-dunyá – love of materialism.

حُبُّ الدُّنْيَا رَاْسُ كُلِّ خَطِيْعَةٍ

Love of dunyá is the root of all sins.

This root has been extirpated – it has been taken out completely. And when the root has been taken out, how can there be a trunk? Branches emerge from the trunk. If the root is not there and there is no trunk, how can there be any branches? So, hubbe-dunyá is the root and the root has been eradicated – eradicated in such a way that it does not sprout again. This is termed zawále akhláqe-razílah bimalkah-támah. A root will sprout a little shoot; the shoot develops into a trunk; the trunk will give off branches; and the branches will have smaller branches coming off them. Seeing there is no root, where will the impure, evil and disgraceful branches spring out from? Where will takabbur come from? Where will tama' spring from? Where will hirs show itself? Where will bukhl show itself? From where will ghussah poke its head? The root is non-existent. The root of all the akhláqe-razílah is hubbe-dunyá. The Eternal Being is so embedded in the heart that there is just no place for finite beings. This is because what is Eternal and what is finite are two opposites and two opposites cannot occupy the same position at the same time.

Loving one's wife is a sign of wiláyet

That is why Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه used to say: "That person who has love for his wife – what is real and true 'ishq – what doubt can there be in his being a walí of Alláh Ta'álá?" This is what Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said.

Its explanation is as follows: The apron of wiláyet demands an extremely exquisite and fantastic degree of chastity. (This means that, in order to aspire to the high state of being a saint – a walí of Alláh Ta'álá – an extremely high degree of modesty and chastity are absolutely essential.) So, upon having true 'ishq for one's wife, it follows that one will not gaze lustfully at others. Thus, this person will have an extreme degree of chastity and, therefore, what doubt can there be that this is the degree of chastity required for wiláyet and, therefore, of this person being a walí?

To love one's wife – to have 'ishq for her – is not 'ishq for ghairulláh (love

for somebody other than Alláh Ta'álá). This 'ishq is for the sake of Alláh Ta'álá. Huzúr's صلى الله عليه وسلم du'á was:

اَللّٰهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِيْ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يَّنْفَعُنِيْ حُبُّهُ عِنْدَكَ

O Alláh! I am asking for the rizq of Your muhabbat (love) and the muhabbat of that person whose muhabbat will be an aid to Your muhabbat.

Therefore, such muhabbat for one's wife will be an aid and reinforcement of one's muhabbat of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá. This can, therefore, not be considered to be 'ishq of ghairulláh. Such a person will be an embodiment of chastity.

The proof of this is the following: To what a high degree did Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم not have 'ishq for Alláh Ta'álá! Yet, despite this, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم also had 'ishq for Hadhrat Á'ísháh رضى الله تعالى عنها. Despite this 'ishq for her, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم fulfilled the rights of equality with regard to his other wives. Even in his terminal illness Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم observed the finer points of fulfilling their rights, but nevertheless, he eagerly waited for the turn of Hadhrat Á'ísháh رضى الله تعالى عنها. When the other wives came to know of his feelings, that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم anxiously awaited the turn of Hadhrat Á'ísháh رضى الله تعالى عنها and that he experienced difficulty in going to each one in turn, all the other wives unanimously said: "Stay with Á'ísháh from now onwards." The point is that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had 'ishq for Hadhrat Á'ísháh رضى الله تعالى عنها.

So, to have 'ishq for one's wife is not contrary to dawáme-tá'at – nay, to the contrary, it is included in dawáme-tá'at.

To recapitulate: This digression occurred when we were discussing zikr: We had said that zikr is of two types, direct zikr or indirect zikr; we had also stated that zikr could also fall into the category of dawáme-zikr; and then we had discussed small amounts of zikr and abundant zikr. Included was a discussion on the interlocking of two 'ibádat.

The interconnection of the Kalimah, zikr, taqwá and ímán

Originally, we were saying that in "wa alzamahum kalimatat-taqwá" the possessive case of the Kalimah is towards taqwá and by Kalimah is meant Kalimah-Tayyibah, which is a zikr. And then its demand is taqwá. Taqwá, in turn, is the name of the wájib duty of dawáme-tá'at. The demand of

the Kalimah is kathrate-zikr. This Kalimah is also the basic fundamental of ímán. So, if the demand of the Kalimah is taqwá, to which is attached ímán, Haqq Ta'álá causes an increase in the ímán.

[This paragraph appears rather complicated. In simple terms Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه *is demonstrating the interconnection of the Kalimah, zikr, taqwá and ímán. This being so, by abundant zikr, one's ímán will also increase, as is proven by the áyet that follows. Tr.]*

هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ أَنْزَلَ السَّكِيْنَةَ فِيْ قُلُوْبِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ لِيَزْدَادُوْٓا إِيْمَانًا مَّعَ إِيْمَانِهِمْ

He (Alláh) is such, who has created forbearance in the hearts of the Muslims so that their ímán can increase with the initial ímán that they had. (Bayánul-Qur'án) (S.48.4.)

One may put it forward as follows: "Take this ímán and then take some more ímán!" That is, Alláh Ta'álá is saying that the purpose of developing tahammul is to increase one's ímán. From the grammatical analysis of this verse, the meaning we arrive at is that, by being given the tahammul in the original ímán, their ímán was increased. We can deduce that there is a continual increase in ímán and that this increase in ímán accrues by means of having taqwá with the ímán.

Who does not desire an increase in matters that are good? The farmer desires an increase in his cultivation; the landowner desires an increase in his properties; the trader desires an increase in his business. So, everybody wishes to have an increase in what is good. So, O mu'minín! What can be better and greater than ímán? So, why is there not a quest for an increase in ímán?

Methodology for an increase in ímán

And, if the desire is there, there is a means and methodology for increasing everything. If the farmer wishes an increase in his produce, he ploughs the land thoroughly, he sows the best quality seeds at the proper time, he waters it when necessary and he protects the plants – as far as is possible – from storms and hail. In the same way the landowner will accumulate money to buy more land. In the same way the trader buys good quality merchandise at the right time at a cheap price and then sells the merchandise at the

appropriate time at a good profit. Is this not so, or do you think that an increase will accrue by itself? In the same way, O mu'minín, the ímán that you have and the increase that you desire in it, the procedure – besides which there is no other procedure – is that you occupy yourself in tá'at and zikr. The basic concept behind zikr is to seat that Being in the heart and the mention (zikr) of this Being flowing from the lips continually. What is in the heart is on the lookout for any excuse to stream out of the lips. What is normally seated in the heart? The answer is: that for which one has an extremely high degree of muhabbat; and there is no other being who is worthy of such extreme love except Zát Bárí Ta'álá! Therefore, there is absolutely no reason why His name should not keep coming to one's lips. Haqq Ta'álá has made this such a general activity that even tahárat is not necessary. Tahárat has not been made a precondition (unlike other acts of 'ibádat) for making zikr. Alláh Ta'álá desires dawáme-zikr; and dawáme-tá'at involves zikr, as has been explained above in the Hadíth Sharíf, that every obedient bondsman is a zákir, at times directly and at times indirectly.

So, that mudarris who, with ikhlás and qaná'at, without hirs-o-tama' and acquisitiveness (lálach) for wealth, is giving Díní ta'lím – even though he is teaching kitábs preparatory to the study of Bukhárí Sharíf – he is in tá'at and directing himself to Alláh Ta'álá. This is so even though he may be reciting the grammatical declensions of *"fa'ala-yaf'alu,"* or listening to the students and he is listening with full concentration. If he does not listen with full concentration, then some student may be repeating the declensions incorrectly and this will be contrary to his responsibility to his profession of teaching. Therefore, he most definitely has to listen with full attention to the student. On such occasions his zikr will diminish, because the mind cannot concentrate on two things at the same time. But this diminishing is not a real diminution.

Take it that somebody sneezes involuntarily or coughs involuntarily – for that short while, temporarily, there will be some diminution perceived, but this is not real diminution. In the real sense of the word diminution would mean a lessening evident all the time – when he is sitting, when he is standing, when he is walking, when he is eating, when he is making wudhú,

when he is tired, when he is weak. This is real diminution. The incidental diminution that comes at the time of sneezing or coughing would not be referred to as real diminution. Similarly, the lessening that comes in one's zikr or tawajjuh-illalláh when involved in some other tá'at, will not be termed a diminution. Real diminution is that situation in which the thought of Alláh Ta'álá, the consciousness of Alláh Ta'álá, the remembrance of Alláh Ta'álá in one's heart is not there most of the time. Most of the time the name of Alláh Ta'álá is not on the tongue.

Importance of knowing masá'il

These are masá'il of Sulúk. That person who is a real and serious sálik has a dire need for these masá'il. Just as there are masá'il of fiqh, so there are masá'il of Sulúk as well. Those who perform namáz have an extreme need to know the masá'il of namáz. Similarly, those involved in the 'ibádat and tá'at of purification of the inner self, have a need of these masá'il – and the need is extremely important. Whereas those not performing their namáz or not performing their qadhá, what need have they of the masá'il of namáz? Similarly, those who are not pursuing the path leading to isláh, which entails spiritual cleansing (tazkíyah), purification (tasfíyah), detoxification (takhlíyah) and adornment (tajlíyah) – what need have they of the masá'il of Sulúk? So, just as the tálib of salát has need of the masá'il of salát, in the same manner the true and sincere tálib of tazkíyah has need of the masá'il of Sulúk at every step.

I remember an episode concerning Mauláná Rashid Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه: Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه mentioned that Mauláná Rashid Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه, when he reached old age, used to remark: "What I have achieved at this stage of my life is that I do not find it necessary to consult any kitáb to look for any mas'alah concerning namáz." The deduction from this statement is that, after such a long period, he had mastered that amount of knowledge concerning namáz that it was not necessary for him to refer to any kitáb. It also infers that this knowledge refers to masá'il of namáz only. As for the other 'ibádat, whether it pertains to acts of worship or to the category of transactions, etc., he still found it necessary to refer to other kitábs.

[Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه, addressing the eight to ten students of Iftá present in the majlis, said:]

O Muftís! Just assess how necessary it is to study kitábs; how extremely important it is to devote one's time to attaining 'ilm; and how imperative it is to do research, to probe, to investigate, to explore in-depth. And, seeing how necessary it is to do research on the masá'il of namáz, etc., of záhirí 'ibádat, then similarly – nay, even more so – is it necessary to know the masá'il of bátiní 'ibádat. The masá'il mentioned above are ones concerning Sulúk and Tasawwuf – masá'il of the bátin – which the ahle bátin have need of.

Importance of asking. Some examples

Example one: Once a lady came to ask a mas'alah. She said: "My husband has passed away (and I am in iddat). Some ghair-mahram men do not wait for permission before entering the house. They merely clear their throat audibly and walk in. My gaze fell on them. What I wish to know is: has my iddat become invalid by my gaze falling on them?"

These are some misconceptions, from the Age of Ignorance, that are fixed in the minds of people and such misconceptions are eradicated with great difficulty. But see, this lady felt the need so she went to find out the mas'alah.

The answer to this query is as follows: She will need to leave the house to answer the call of nature; or she will leave the house to see to the cooking if there is nobody to assist her; or even if there is somebody to assist her then, too, she may need to leave the precincts of the house itself. However, she should not go beyond the boundary of the last door on the property. And if her gaze falls on somebody while in the house, it does not break the iddat. That leaves the question of purdah: Those with whom she has to observe purdah, this she has to do all the time, whether she is observing her iddat or not.

Example two: There was another query: A certain person asked the following mas'alah: "I had some black material with me, imported from another country. I had some clothes sewn with it for personal use. Somebody told me that it is harám to wear black clothes."

He must have heard it from some Shí'ah, etc. In my reply I said: "Ask this other person what is the reason for it being harám. He should provide proof of it." This reply has the answer to his query as well in that, when there is no Shar'í reason for an item to be ná-já'iz, then it is já'iz. At times such errors occur when people have no knowledge of the Sharí'at.

You see that neither did that lady's iddat become invalid, nor is it harám to wear black-coloured clothing, but not knowing the mas'alah, both persons became distressed and made necessary enquiries. It happens similarly with that person treading the path of Sulúk that he may come across some problem and he may become distressed through ignorance. It may be that the matter was correct, but in his view he thought it to be incorrect. This is why it is necessary for him to know the masá'il of Sulúk.

The majlis of the sheikh is a majlis of 'ilm

This is why the majlis of the sheikh is a majlis of the knowledge of Sulúk for the sálikín – it is a majlis of the knowledge of tazkíyah. There is not ta'lím of only zikr, but the majlis is for the knowledge of zikr. That is, the majlis takes place to narrate those categories of knowledge which become necessary when the effects of making zikr manifest themselves. Similarly, the majlis takes place to impart the knowledge of the presentation of the effects of dawáme-tá'at with zikr. The majlis is not for the ta'lím of tasbíh and zikr.

So, in the same manner that the person performing namáz will benefit from mention of the masá'il of namáz and he will be happy at these explanations, those who are travelling on the path of Sulúk – those who are involved in their tazkíyah, who encounter problems all the time, who experience certain manifestations – these are the ones who will benefit from these discourses. Their hearts will be happy at these discussions. Their hearts will be affected by these talks. Certain sentences will actually make them ecstatic. As was mentioned just now, that person able to make only a little zikr because of being occupied with Díní or permissible worldly work has no lesser thawáb and qurb than that person able to make zikr in abundance. How happy will these people not feel on hearing this mas'alah of Sulúk! Each such individual will tell himself: "Today I have been given

the answer to my question – the answer to that problem that I thought was some deficiency in me and which caused me to become despondent. Today I have received an answer bringing with it inner tranquillity." He will be feeling happy and will continue with his efforts.

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه related an incident concerning Sháh Fadhlur-Rahmán Ganj Murádábádí رحمة الله عليه. Before relating this incident let me relate another incident that comes to mind. This concerns obedience to the sheikh (ittibá-e-sheikh) and was also related to us by Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه:

Qissas concerning ittibá-e-sheikh

Qissah one: The wazír from Bhúpál visits Sháhsáhib:

It was frequently witnessed that at Sháhsáhib's place (that is, at Sháh Fadhlur-Rahmán Ganj Murádábádí's رحمة الله عليه place), a visitor would be curtly sent away. Sháhsáhib would bluntly instruct: "Take him out of here! O, just take him away!"

Once it happened that the wazír of Sháh-Jahán Begum-wáliah of Bhúpál arrived at his place. It was at night. According to his habit Sháhsáhib said: "Go! Go!" He gave the order for him to be taken away. Sháhsáhib's son, whose name was Muhammad-Mia, said: "This is the wazír of the Nawáb-Begum of Bhúpál." Sháhsáhib remarked, speaking loudly: "So, what has that to do with me? If he is a wazír, he is a wazír of his own place. Get him out!"

He was always in a state of juzb (absorption). Sháhsáhib's son pleaded with his father again. Sháhsáhib relented: "Very well. Call him in." He was called in. Sháhsáhib asked: "What brings you here?" The wazír replied, Begumsáhibah has sent me to request you to make du'á for her." Sháhsáhib said: "Very well. I shall make du'á." The du'á was made.

The wazír even obtained permission to stay over, but on condition that it was only till midnight. That is, he had permission to stay in the khánqáh till twelve or one o'clock only. He was to leave the khánqáh after that. The wazír agreed to this.

Just see now how he acted. Think about it. From this one will be able to gauge what the quality of the people of that age was and what the attitude

was of those who supposedly had proper i'tiqád. Nowadays? Just do not ask!

Hadhratwálá related that when the time for him to leave approached, the wazírsáhib gathered up his baggage and prepared to depart. Disturbed from their sleep, the eyes of some of the others residing in the khánqáh opened and they saw the wazírsáhib ready to leave. These residents of the khánqáh, these who had faith and confidence in their sheikh, said: "Where will you go at this early hour? Where will you stay? It is still night. You will have difficulties. Stay over here and you may leave in the morning." The wazírsahib, who was from a noble family – nobility has with it a certain effect – said: "It was the order of the sheikh. I had permission to stay only till this time. If I were to stay beyond this time it will be betrayal of a trust and I will be acting in opposition to his command. I cannot stay. I will leave the khánqáh and stay in some masjid or other." Consequently, he did not stay but left immediately.

From this you can gauge what those with i'tiqád were saying and what level of behaviour the wazírsáhib exhibited. This incident has been mentioned incidentally because of the beneficial lesson in it. What I actually wanted to do was relate another incident.

Qissah two: Sháhsáhib and the muríd who refused to leave

In a similar manner, another individual came to Sháhsáhib. Salám and musáfahah took place cordially. After a short while Sháhsáhib said: "Very well! Go! Get up!" This person stayed put – he refused to get up! Sháhsáhib himself stood up, took this person's bedding and placed it outside the door. This person stood up, went to fetch his bedding from outside and brought it straight back in and sat down again! Sháhsáhib said: "You have come back? Get up! Go!" When this person remained seated, Sháhsáhib again stood up, took his bedding and again placed it outside. This person again fetched his bedding and again came to sit inside. Sháhsáhib again took the bedding out and this person again brought it in.

This cycle repeated itself three or four times. Sháhsáhib then said: "Have something to eat – it is mealtimes." Sháhsáhib went inside the house and sent some food from inside. The visitor said: "All this hustle and bustle is

because of food – I shall not eat the food!" He sent the food back. Sháh Mauláná Fadhlur-Rahmán Ganj Murádábádí Sáhib رحمة الله عليه brought the food back himself and said: "Brother, the fight is between me and you and not with the food. Eat the food." The visitor said. "I shall not eat." Sháhsáhib said again. "What fight is there with the food? Come, eat the food." This time the visitor complied and ate. Sháhsáhib then asked. "Why have you come?" The visitor replied. "There is some obstacle in my bátiní condition. I have come to have it remedied." Sháhsáhib said: "Oho! Why did you not say so right at the beginning? I had thought that, just like all these worldly people who come here for me to make du'á for their worldly problems, you had also come for the same purpose. They waste much of one's time." Sháhsáhib said: "Fine. Sit down." The visitor came to sit nearby and Sháhsáhib resolved the problem that the person had encountered. The visitor made salám and musáfahah and then departed.

It is appropriate to note that Sháhsáhib did not get kashf of the purpose of the visitor's coming, whereas Sháhsáhib used to experience a lot of kashf. Kashf is not essential for a person to be a buzurg – if kashf occurs, well and good; if it does not occur it is not a problem.

In Sulúk and Tasawwuf – also called tazkíyah-bátin – together with deeds performed, certain conditions of a unique type present themselves. This person then experiences difficulties. In order to solve these problems it is necessary to know certain laws. These are called the masá'il of Tasawwuf. These discourses are to enunciate these masá'il of Tasawwuf. These discourses are not for enumerating the masá'il of Fiqh. These discourses are beneficial for those who are involved in the tazkíyah of their bátin. Those who do not fall into this category should sit silently, for they will not understand. Take this example: If somebody is absolutely famished and he is asked. "How much are two plus two?" he will say: "Four slices of bread." The reason is that he is desirous of bread. He will not say: "Four rupees," because he is not desirous of rupees at that moment.

Creating sakínah – calmness/ tranquillity

I was saying that when the demand of the Kalimah is taqwá, then Haqq Ta'álá creates sakínah and tahammul in the hearts of the mu'min muttaqí,

so that there may be an increase in the ímán that is present within him. It is thus apparent that ímán can increase. What are the ways and means of attaining this? It is dawáme-tá'at and kathrate-zikr.

At this juncture there is a point that ordinary folks will also understand: Haqq Ta'álá is saying that Alláh Ta'álá creates sakínah in the hearts of the mu'minín. From this it is to be understood that it is necessary that there should be tahammul in the heart of every mu'min. Another name for this is waqár (dignity / gravity). This means that when one is confronted by some behaviour from others that is contrary to one's temperament – either episodically or continually – one's own attitude should portray sakínah; one should display tahammul; one should not exceed the bounds of dignity; one should not descend into a state where one uses harshness in speech, or words or tone of voice. Another's bitter act should be considered to be a draft of sweet nectar and swallowed! And when will this happen – when will one consider a bitter draft to be sweet nectar? This will only happen if you have drunk it in Sulúk – when the bátiní tazkíyah of the nafs has become solidly embedded in the heart. Then, when that which is embedded in the heart, comes to mind – the concepts firmly planted in the heart are pictured, the ingrained lessons are remembered – this inner force converts the bitter draft to sweet nectar and swallows it. What is this inner force that is sitting there? It is called "ridhá-e-Iláhí" – being pleased with Alláh Ta'álá. Ridhá has converted all bitter things to sweet nectars.

Take this illustration: In the old days when we attended school, malaria was common. As a preventative measure the headmaster would line up the pupils at midday and make them take quinine in his presence. Water was kept nearby and the tablet was given and gulped down with the water. Why did he have to personally supervise this? The reason is that the quinine tablet was very bitter and he had to personally supervise the whole procedure to ensure that nobody defaulted. But nowadays there has been progress: the quinine tablet is sugar-coated. It can be swallowed easily without having to be washed down with huge amounts of water. Just see how a bitter pill was made sweet so that it could slide down the throat with ease.

In the same way, that bitter action that you encounter from others, the

nectar of ridhá-e-Iláhí, which is kept inside you, is mixed with the bitterness and swallowed with ease. In the same way that the bitter quinine tablet is coated with sugar and swallowed to maintain physical health, it is also necessary to swallow the bitter words of others to maintain rúhání health. And what constituent is necessary to eliminate the bitterness? It is ridhá. This ridhá-e-Iláhí is an objective in order to achieve qurb-e-Iláhí. That is why that bitter item has been made sweet and swallowed. This is the effect of treading the path of Sulúk. Even if it is not achieved all at once, it will come steadily, by degrees. The reason is that this person is concerned and attentive, and the effects will manifest, slowly and gradually. His condition becomes such that if anybody throws abuse at him he is not grieved. If he is affected, then it is only momentarily: here it comes and there it goes. He does not sit down despondent. If somebody thumps him on the back he does not even look back to see who it was. He is involved in tazkíyah – involved to that extent that a bitter item, a bitter word, is converted to a sweet word and swallowed.

Conclusion and du'á

I have proven from the segment of the áyet: "Kalimatat-taqwá," the compulsory nature of obedience, as well as some masá'il of Sulúk and the importance of tazkíyah of the nafs. When it becomes compulsory to act on Kalimatat-taqwá, then an increase in ímán occurs, as has been explained in detail above.

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us talabe-sádiq, with zouq and shouq and may He grant us the taufíqe-arzání to adopt the ways and means that Alláh Ta'álá has mentioned, of increasing our ímán.

آمين فِيْ اَمَانَاللہ

Khudá Hafiz

BOOKLET NUMBER FIFTEEN

Rabí-uth-Thání 1424 – June 2003

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh, once again, solely through the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh رحمة الله عليه (also, not forgetting the valued du'ás of our readers!) this fifteenth discourse is ready.

Many readers found the majlis translated in Booklet Number Fourteen a bit difficult to understand. I thus felt that the next majlis to be translated should be easy to understand. Through Alláh Ta'álá's fadhl, I was given some tapes of some majális that were conducted by Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه on one of his trips to South Africa. Among these was a majlis on eating, drinking, clothes and homes – simple and basic topics that affect everybody. One may feel that there cannot be much to discuss as far as these subjects are concerned, but with the unique talents that Alláh Ta'álá had bestowed Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه, these basic topics are discussed with such perspectives as to leave one quite wonderstruck.

May Alláh Ta'álá give us all the taufíq to benefit from these discourses. **آمين**

Dr. I.M.

Clarification:

The "For Friends" series are translations of works in Urdú, mostly from recorded tapes. The original discourses in Urdú are not necessarily recorded by me. For example, the Wasíyet that appears at the end of Booklet Number Six was given to Hadhrat Mauláná Dr. Háfiz Tanwír Ahmed Khán Sáhib دامت برکاته, who noted it down in Urdú, and which was then translated by me into English.

Yes, I do remember being present in some of the majális, but not all of them. It is not possible to note down all those who were instrumental in recording these majális or in printing the Urdú versions or in making them available to me. Readers are requested to make du'á for all involved in having these booklets published.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه *in South Africa, either in 1982 or 1984.]*

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحْمَدَهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

FOOD, DRINK, CLOTHES & HOMES

اَعُوْذُ بِاللهِ مِنَالشَّيْطٰنِالرَّجِيْمِ ○ بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُلُوْا مِنْ طَيِّبٰتِ مَارَزَقْنَاكُمْ

O you who Believe! Eat what is tayyib (pure, delicious and of high quality) which We have provided for you. (S.2.172.)

I have been requested to conduct a majlis – that there should be discourse for a period. So, this is a majlis, but it has also taken on the form of a bayán.

Pondering on what to speak on, the thought came to mind that bayáns on different topics are being given on an on-going basis on various occasions. And, generally, in the minds of people this thought is embedded that the molvísáhibán, what else will they speak on except namáz and rozah? And that we have heard these topics discussed many times already.

Reality of wudhú

So, I could not think that, if there is to be a bayán, what topic it should be on. Ears are already well-acquainted with these topics. I would go so far as to say that people are filled to the brim. And whatever item one's heart is filled to capacity, no delight or enjoyment remains in that item.

If one were to lecture on wudhú people will say that they know how to

make wudhú. However, if one has to ponder over the correct meaning of the word "wudhú", that the root word from which it is derived is "dhau" which means "light/ brilliance", that, making wudhú for years on end, the light and brilliance that is kept in wudhú, has still not entered one's heart, can one still claim that one knows how to make wudhú? If one knew, it may be that one has performed what is fardh but has not paid any attention to what is sunnat and mustahab, there being no wájib acts in wudhú. Also, one may have had no qualms on having left out what is sunnat and mustahab.

Contrary to this, let us look at those personages who, because of their ta'alluq with Alláh Ta'álá, their nisbat with Alláh Ta'álá, their muhabbat of Alláh Ta'álá, that if they leave out any act commanded to them, even though they may not be it in the category of fardh or wájib, but may be in the category of sunnat and mustahab, they feel as if there is a massive burden placed on them, as if a snake has bitten them in their very chests. Until they have not compensated for their lapse, they are not at ease and do not rest. The worrying thought is: "On the Day of Qiyámat what face will I show to Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم?"

Qissah concerning Khwájah Mu'ínuddín Chistí رحمة الله عليه

So much so, that Khwájah Mu'ínuddín Chistí رحمة الله عليه once read his Ishá namáz and went to sleep. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم came to him in his dream and said: "Mu'ínuddín! You claim to have muhabbat for me, but you have omitted a sunnat! When making wudhú for Ishá you left out making khilál of your fingers?" Khwájahsáhib's temperament was not like mine and yours. His disposition had a completely different hue to it. His eyes opened from his sleep. He got up, repeated his wudhú and performed his Ishá namáz again.

Was his initial wudhú not valid? It was. Was his initial Ishá namáz not valid? It was. Yet, people like us make an effort to bring perfection to all our worldly tasks, that there should be no defect at all in that task. Here, there was a shortcoming, a certain defect – a sunnat was omitted, a mustahab act was neglected. How could he tolerate this? His ta'alluq with Alláh Ta'álá was not like ours. He made wudhú again and repeated his namáz. He was

not satisfied with only this – he was not complacent with this act only, he was not content at merely doing this. However, in compensation for his neglect, being penitent, he reprimanded himself: “Why had I omitted the mustahab of khilál of the fingers?” He performed a hundred rak’ats of nafl namáz daily. This was for a period of six months certainly, but I think it could have been for a year! This is why there was an illumination produced in his heart from the act of wudhú. What his namáz did was a stage much higher.

As I was saying, were I to speak on wudhú, people will say that we know how to make wudhú. The same will be said about namáz. So, my mind kept on pondering: What should I speak on? People have heard everything – bayáns take place almost daily. Also, may Alláh Ta’álá cause the Tablígh Jamá’at to progress more, with blessings and sincerity – its talks are on-going, mostly on Kalimah Tayyibah and namáz. So, nothing came to mind.

Just now, a little while ago, when I entered the ’ibádat-khánah for the Maghrib namáz and, as I sat down this áyet which I have recited a little while ago before you, came to mind. Bayáns on namáz and rozah are given all the time, so why not speak on eating and drinking? That is why I recited that short áyet before you. Make du’á that Alláh Ta’álá gives the taufíq to give a bayán in connection with this áyet.

Eat what is pure, delicious and of high quality

In this áyet Alláh Ta’álá is addressing the mu’minín:

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُلُوْا مِنْ طَيِّبٰتِ مَارَزَقْنَاكُمْ

O you who Believe! Eat what is tayyib (pure, delicious and of high quality) which We have provided for you. (S.2.172.)

That is: “Eat of the rizq – Our provisions – given to you by Us.” “Tayyib” means what is not only pure but of high quality and delicious as well. This is the meaning of this áyet.

The question arises: Why is the word “ámanú” (Believers) attached to eating? The grammatical form is that of a command, making it compulsory (wájib). So, how is it that it is wájib to eat? Together with this command is

the condition of "tayyib" – pure and delicious. And further on it is stated: "Which We have provided". A number of issues need to be discussed.

Firstly, the order is to eat. Why has the order been given to eat? The reason is this that those addressed are the "ámanú" – "those who Believe", the mu'minín. Much is contained in the words employed. "Ímán" means to have conviction – to firmly believe, to accept. To have conviction on something implies that whatever is kept in that word is firmly believed – all those aspects that are covered by this word are accepted. This would then mean: "O those of you who believe in Alláh Ta'álá – those who have brought faith on His existence, with the attribute of 'wahdániyet' (Him being One, with no partners,), seeing He is Alím, Qadír, Samí', Basír, Mutasarrif, being One who, bearing in mind your needs, created the heavens and the earth and whatever is on the earth, and whatever is between the heavens and the earth (the wind, clouds, etc.), through His power. And you cannot deny this. You have to acknowledge that our magnanimous and bountiful Creator has created all these for us.

Furthermore: "When I have been your Creator through My power, then from the aspect of divinity, why should I not be the only Deity worthy of being worshipped? When, through My power, for your sake I created everything for your every necessity, that you are dependent on Me for all your needs for your existence, and this you acknowledged and accepted, what is the reason for you not accepting My divinity in the aspect of worshipping Me only in the manner prescribed? It is absolutely necessary that you also accept Me as One being worthy of worship. And, when this the case that I am the only One worthy of being worshipped – that I am your Master, your Nourisher and Cherisher, your Creator, Most-High, All-Powerful, All-Hearing and All-Seeing, All-Domineering, having full power and control over everything – what other being can there be that is worthy of being worshipped? It therefore becomes conclusive and necessary that there is none other worthy of worship except Me, and that your service – which is termed "'ibádat" – becomes necessary."

This conclusion is compulsory but, nonetheless, there is also an áyet laying down the instruction the purpose for the creation of mankind. Alláh Ta'álá has stated:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ ۝

I have not created Jinn and Man except that they worship Me only. (S.51.56.)

What was compulsory from the aspect of takwín, has now been placed in a Sharí'ah context.

The grammatical construction is such that emphasis is placed on the word "only". Seeing that at this moment it is Mankind that is being addressed, the áyet states that insán has been created for the 'ibádat of Alláh Ta'álá alone. We have restricted the meaning of 'ibádat to namáz and rozah only. Note that the word is "li-ya'budún" (to make 'ibádat) and not "li-yasulún" (to perform salát), or li-yasummún" (to keep fasts), or li-yazátún" (to pay zakát), or "li-yazakkarún" (to make zikr). The wording is not that we have been created for specific acts only, like performing salát, or keeping fasts, or giving zakát, or making zikr. A general term has been used – that we have been created for His worship solely.

Duties of a slave

The root word of "ya'budún" is "'abd" and it means "a slave". In Fársí, the word is "bandah". Thus, Alláh Ta'álá is our Master and we are His slaves. The meaning of the áyet would thus be as follows:

"I have created mankind for My slavery – that he should live as My slave." As you know, a slave has no specified duties but general duties. If he is told to cook food, he cooks food; if he is told at any time to massage the legs of his master, he massages his legs; if he is instructed to spread out the dastarkhán and feed others, he spreads it out and feeds others; if he is told to prepare water for wudhú or istinjá he prepares the water; and, dear brothers, if the king is invited anywhere at any time and he is unable to attend, he will give this very same slave of his the necessary royal credentials and send him to represent royalty at the function. This is the reality of being a slave.

From here it is apparent his position is not the same as that of a servant, worker or employee. In this latter situation the worker is given a specific duty to perform in a specific time period and he is entitled to be paid when his duties end.

The whole creation was present for this type of duty. The various creations

had the necessary fortitude, they had the necessary strength. Alláh Ta'álá had created vegetation, minerals, animals, malá'ikah and so forth. There is not a single creation from amongst these which is not making a very specific 'ibádat of Alláh Ta'álá.

Sháh Walíyulláh رحمة الله عليه, in his amazing kitáb: "Hujjatul-Báligah", has written an amazing commentary. He states that if we look at the trees, they are also occupied in 'ibádat: their 'ibádat is qiyám – standing erect. Creation like stone and rock, in the form of mountains, are also in 'ibádat. The 'ibádat of mountains is qu'úd – to sit down firmly. Animals are of varied forms. The quadrupets are in rukú – they are bent forward. Some animals are in perpetual sajdah. These are animals like the snake, the turtle and the scorpion – animals that drag themselves along the ground and remain on the ground entirely. In these ways animals, minerals and vegetation are all in 'ibádat – some standing erect, some bowing forwards, others in prostration and others firmly set in the ground.

Similarly, the malá'ikah are also in 'ibádat. They have very specific 'ibádat. Those who were instructed to be in rukú when they were created are in rukú and will remain in rukú till the day of Qiyámat. Others, when created, were commanded to be in sajdah, will remain in sajdah till the day of Qiyámat. Others are in qiyám, others in jalsah, others in qá'idah. (To sit after sajdah is called jalsah; and to sit after the erect, qiyám, position is called qá'idah – both terms refer to sitting). So, the malá'ikah are also in 'ibádat, but in very specific 'ibádat of only one type. So much so that seventy thousand malá'ikah make tawáf (circumambulate) the Baitul-Ma'múr on a daily basis, and those who have had an opportunity once, do not get an opportunity to make tawáf again till the Day of Qiyámat. Daily, new groups of seventy thousand malá'ikah continue to make tawáf of the Baitul-Ma'múr. So, what must their numbers be? From this you can see that the 'ibádat of the malá'ikah is in the category of employees, that they have been set to do a specific duty for a specific time-period. On the contrary, the situation as far as insán is concerned, his 'ibádat, his obedience and his service are not in the category of a worker or employee, but in the category of a slave and of a khalífah. A slave has no one specific

duty. Whatever work is entrusted to the slave he is willing and ready to carry it out. The master of a slave has the right to order him as he wishes, and even to sell him.

So, when Alláh Ta'álá states that He has created man only for His worship it means that man has been created for servitude to Alláh Ta'álá. One cannot say that, since man has been created solely for the worship of Alláh Ta'álá, that he has now to stay in the confines of the masjid only and occupy himself with namáz, rozah, recitation of tasbíh, tiláwat of the Qur'án Sharíf only.

This is only one type of 'ibádat. This is not the correct meaning of the term "'ibádat". Real servitude is to carry out at whatever time, whatever duty, whatever obedience, whatever service has been commanded.

When told to eat, the slave is ready to eat. When told not to eat, he is ready to remain hungry. Being civilised, he may, at times, be told to behave in an "uncivilised" manner, he is prepared to do this even: when told to take off his clothes, wrap himself in two pieces of cloth, and told to run bareheaded, to walk round and round, he does this. When an "irrational" action is commanded, that he is to take some pebbles and fling them at some specific rocks, he is prepared to do this also. Obviously, I am referring to the person going for hajj, donning the ihrám, making tawáf of the Ka'bah Sharíf and pelting the jamarát in Minah.

Goodness! Is this also something rational, that you take off your normal clothes and replace them with two sheets of cloth to wrap around you, that you become bare-headed, that you cut neither your nails nor your hair? Doing all these, has the person ostensibly not gone crazy? Shaitán is neither visible nor does he stand at certain spots, but you throw pebbles at him! Hundreds of animals are present and there is no ways that they will all be eaten, nevertheless, slaughter them! These, by way of illustration, are a few examples that have been placed before you.

What type of 'ibádat is all this? But, seeing he has placed himself in bondage to Alláh Ta'álá, and ordered to perform whatever task, at whatever time, in whatever manner, this slave carries out these orders and does whatever is commanded, at whatever time and in whatever manner told to him.

When you have understood the above and this concept has become embedded within you, then the word "ámanú" demands from the tashrí'í aspect [as set out in the Sharí'at], the service, the obedience and the varied acts of 'ibádat, all of which cannot be undertaken until the person has the strength to carry them out. Think about this: Until this person has not the strength and the power, what tasks will he be able to undertake? How will he hasten, how will he run, how will he climb, how will he stay hungry, how will he be able to slaughter and, several times daily, how will he bow down, how will he able to prostrate himself, how will he be able to stand and for how long will he be able to stand? So, if he has no strength and power in his body, how will he be able to carry out these acts of obedience, service and 'ibádat? For a human, from the aspect of servitude, the demands of the ímán of a mu'min, is to remain ready at all times for obedience, service and 'ibádat; and for this a special physical strength and power is necessary.

Mere rúhání strength and power by themselves are not sufficient. This rúhání strength and power are inherently present in the malá'ikah, who are in no need of eating and drinking as they do not possess a physical body. They have no mood-swings. They do not fall ill. They do not become weak. They do not have the basic components in their makeup for these to display themselves, in contradiction to man, who possess the basic components for these limitations to show themselves.

The rúh was in musháhadah-e-Haqq

This rúh that is inside the physical body, was occupied in 'ibádat from before, like the malá'ikah. It is not that the rúh was not occupied in 'ibádat in the 'Álame-arwáh before it came into the world – it was involved in the 'ibádat of Musháhadah-e-Haqq . However, it was the wish of Alláh Ta'álá that this rúh should be placed in a physical body, become activated in it, and then be occupied in 'ibádat. Otherwise, the malá'ikah were present for mere 'ibádat. But Alláh Ta'álá's wish was that there should be a noble and honourable distinctive creation, with the rúh placed in a physical body having some special qualities, and having an intelligence that could think and be able to discern, and be placed in this world. Thus, it became necessary, in order to obey, serve and make the various forms of 'ibádat,

that this physical body has strength and power. The more strength and power that this body has, proportionately the greater will be the ’ibádat that it will be able to undertake. If a person wishes to stand and recite His Word to Him but he has no strength in his legs, he will not be able to do this. If he has no strength and power in his back, he will not be able to make rukú and stay in sajdah for any length of time. This is proved daily by one’s observations. How do people make ’ibádat when weak and when strong, when ill and when well, when at home and when on a journey? So, until there is no strength and power in this body, it will not be able to make ibadat.

So, it has become manifest that the demands of ímán are that of obedience and ’ibádat. And the demand of obedience and ’ibádat is that of having physical strength and power. Now, in order to acquire these, to attain these, it is necessary that the proper means, the procedures and the methodologies be employed. This is because this world is an ’Álame-asbáb – a world where means have to be employed. Until and unless the means are not utilised, Alláh Ta’álá’s system is such that the objective will not be attained.

We have come to know that it is necessary to eat in order to make ’ibádat. And, in order to eat, edible items are necessary. And, in order to obtain these, the means and methodologies for obtaining and procuring them are necessary. And the rule is that the means that are necessary also fall into the category of necessity. Therefore, seeing ’ibádat is wájib, and in order to carry out ’ibádat eating also becomes wájib; and in order to eat utilising the means is wájib. So, it follows, according to the rule enunciated above that, in order to make ibadat, it becomes wájib to use the means for obtaining food. When this is so, that it becomes wájib to utilise the means for earning a livelihood, then it follows that earning a livelihood and utilising the means for this, also fall in the category of ’ibádat. Ponder over this!

However, it is important to bear the following perspective in mind: The fundamental or original objective is ’ibádat. This is of primary importance. The means to this objective, although also falling into the category of wájib, take on a secondary importance, because they are not objectives in themselves but are a means to the primary objective of ’ibádat. They

are subservient to the primary objective. According to values, the primary objective of ’ibádat will hold the highest position and will be of greatest importance, whereas the means will hold a lesser value and will be of lesser importance. So, the original ’ibádat will be of primary importance, whereas eating to make ’ibádat will be of lesser importance and the means to attain food for eating will also be of secondary and lesser importance.

To summarise: Haqq Ta’álá has stated: “I have created you solely for My ’ibádat. For this ’ibádat strength and power is necessary. The means and methods to attain these are also ’ibádat as far as you are concerned, in that you may be able to eat and become stronger so that you may make more and more ’ibádat.”

The progress of ímán is dependent on deeds

الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ ۚ

All good words rise to Him and he exalts all virtous deeds. (S.35.10)

The Kalimah-Tayyibah ascends upwards, towards the heavens. However, in soaring upwards and maintaining its momentum and attaining an elevated stage, it has no intrinsic power to do so. It requires the assistance of an external force in order to be able to propel it. Haqq Ta’álá has said that the force of elevating this Kalimah is “*’amilus-sálihah*” – good/ pious deeds.

Thus, because of the demands of ímán and by virtue of the need to make ’ibádat, it becomes necessary to eat, so that one can have the necessary strength and power for this, and one can perform good deeds – ’amilus-sálihah – to increase and elevate one’s ímán more and more.

That is why Alláh Ta’álá has ordered: “O you with ímán, eat!” Without eating you will not be able to do anything. And this eating will be included in your ’ibádat. You should not consider this eating to be a “worldly” activity and you stop eating! Yes, when, together with eating and performing good deeds with taqwá, you attain spiritual strength – a rúhání power – and your spirituality (rúhániyet) becomes very elevated. Eating less or not eating at all for a few days, will not bring about any physical weakness in you. But do not try to do this in the initial phases.

From the stories of the auliyá-Alláh, annotated in the books of history of

the auliyá-Alláh, the following practice is proven to be true:

A walí of Alláh Ta'álá took out an almond from its shell and started fasting. At the time of iftár he took out the almond and nibbled a very small piece from it, making the intention of breaking the fast and at the same, making the intention of keeping fast on the following day. The amount of water that he drank was the amount that the web space between the thumb and the index finger can hold. Having eaten this amount and sipped this amount of water, he fasted again on the following day! By that one nibble and sip, he has made his iftár and his sehrí and has had his meal. It is not necessary that only if one sleeps and then one wakes up for a meal, then only ha one made sehrí. He did not neglect his niyets.

In a similar manner, when entering a masjid the more niyets for khair that one makes the more thawáb one will receive. One may make the niyet for i'tikáf, for namáz, for zikr, for tiláwat, and so forth.

To continue: In this way the one almond lasted him six months! How he managed to do this, what was his rúhání strength, how he managed to survive, are issues that he – and those who have attained some rúháníyet – would have been able to explain. These are matters that I and you cannot fathom.

Let us leave aside such situations. These are individualised incidents to do with juzb (fervour). Generally the situation is that the demand of ímán is 'ibádat and this is dependent on eating. That is why Alláh Ta'álá has stated:

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُلُوْا

Eat! Without eating you will not have the strength to make 'ibádat. However, bear in mind:

كُلُوْا مِنْ طَيِّبٰتِ

Eat what is halál, pure and clean. Do not eat what is harám. The word used is tayyib (good) and not táhir (pure). The word tayyib denotes that the food should not only be pure but delicious. This is the meaning of the word. If you wish you may check on the tafsír. Tayyib refers to what is not only pure but delicious and enjoyable as well – that which the temperament

will welcome and accept; that which will strengthen the blood. Whatever is gross and course that you eat in your diet will become excreta and the production of blood will be less. The blood that is formed will not be of a fine quality. When blood is not of a fine quality then there will be no special power and life produced. So, why should Alláh Ta'álá say that one should eat what is course and indigestible, eat what is not pleasant?

Eating & drinking what is delicious is not contrary to zuhd

There was a sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه, Abul Haytham, who owned an orchard which was situated outside of Madínah and in which there was a well. The well produced very cool water. He used to bring cool water from this well for Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم to drink.

From this it is apparent that if a person, according to his capabilities and strength, were to make some arrangements, without any special and undue formality, to obtain or use an item, then this would not be contrary to zuhd. It is not contrary to being unattached to worldliness in one's heart. Zuhd means that a person, in his heart, is not attracted to or attached to dunyá. By taking this cool water and drinking it, Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم did not forbid us from enjoying what is delicious. The degree of joy, cheer and fulfilment experienced at drinking cold water is not experienced by drinking hot water. Yes, drinking hot tea will bring about cheer and enjoyment because these are the inherent qualities of tea. However, we are seeing people drinking cold tea – iced tea – as is the custom in Europe!

That is why our Hají Imdádulláh Sáhib رحمة الله علیه, the Pír of our Pír Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمة الله علیه, among the many advices that he gave our sheikh, he also gave the following bit of advice: "Mia Ashraf Alí, whenever you drink water, drink cold water, so that you may make shukr with your heart. Otherwise the shukr will be only from the throat and not from the heart."

When I was still a student at dárul-'ulúm Deoband, I once wrote to Hadhratwálá رحمة الله علیه, that from a young age my temperament is such that I desire to eat nice food, even though it be little. I wrote: "Eating nice food, good food, produces a cheer and joy in one's disposition and from inside, from my heart, the urge arises to make shukr. So, I have the desire to eat

delicious food." This is what I wrote to Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه. The method of replying to letters was not to write a separate letter, but to draw a line on the same letter at the relevant area and write the reply there.

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه wrote back:

اَلطَّاعِمُ الشَّاكِرُ كَالصَّائِمِ الصَّابِرِ

That person, having eaten and making shukr of Alláh Ta'álá, is the same as that person keeping fasts and making sabr. We will not go into the debate of the Sufis whether sabr has a higher stage or shukr.

From the incident where arrangements were undertaken to provide cool drinking water for Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, we can deduce the following principle in order to obtain a working rule: To eat what is delicious; to wear what is "delicious", to build a house that is "delicious" – that is, to enjoy good food, to wear good quality clothes and to build comfortable homes – all fall in the category of being "delightful", producing cheer and elation in one's temperament. On entering the home one's spirits lift up.

We are in need of food all the time and, generally, everybody is need of food; and strength is dependent on eating food, which is why food is being mentioned. Eat, but eat what is tayyib – what is pure, what is delicious.

Another reason for this statement is that, from the time of his creation, from conception to birth, this human has been safeguarded from what is harám. He has been protected from the use of impure substances. When he was in his mother's womb, you are aware that the child is being fed through blood vessels in the umbilical cord which connects the child to the mother. The mother's menses stop. The child is thus nourished through the mother's blood via the umbilical cord and not orally. Alláh Ta'álá could also have made it that the mother's blood could have flowed into the mouth of the foetus and the infant be nourished orally. However, the infant has been protected from ingesting anything harám while in the mother's womb. This is an intimation from Alláh Ta'álá that: "Seeing I had made these arrangements for you while you were in your mother's womb, it is now your responsibility, after coming into this world, to maintain this arrangement yourself." If tayyib was not supposed to be for him could najis (impure) be his lot? Unthinkable!

The rúhániyet and núrániyet that is produced by eating what is tayyib cannot be produced by eating what is najis and what is harám. And also, whatever the nutrition is of the species, if it is utilised in the correct manner, then the body will grow and thrive and gain strength.

The examples I can quote are those of animals. Animals are of various types and their nutrition also varies. If one species tries to imitate another and eat the food eaten by the other, it will not thrive but will destroy itself. The food of the lion is meat. If cattle or goats start eating meat will they thrive or die? They will definitely die. There is an animal called khinzír. There are other species of animals which are the cow, the water-buffalo and the goat. The food of the former is rubbish and excreta, while the food of the latter are items like grain and grass, etc. If the khinzír eats what is filthy and impure, it will thrive and grow fat and strong. But if the cow, water-buffalo or goat were to eat the excreta that the khinzír eats, will they also thrive and grow fat and strong, or weak? These animals should not be eating the food eaten by the khinzír. They will obviously be harmed by this food.

In a similar way, nay, even more so, the food of insán is what is tayyib – what is pure and good, because man is more delicate than the animals. Another aspect: If the kuffár eat what is harám, they may thrive and become big and fat, but when the Muslim eats what is harám, his health is going to suffer. His rúhániyet will be corrupted. Whatever 'ibádat he used to do while eating halál, he will stop performing that 'ibádat on eating harám. His temperament will not be lively, it will not be cheerful, and he will not be able to make 'ibádat – and making 'ibádat is the objective.

Eating halál and tayyib produces rúhániyet and núrániyet

There is the story concerning Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه that goes as follows:

He went into seclusion for a period of forty days – a chillah. We heard this qissah from Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه. The forty days passed, but he experienced no rúhániyet or núrániyet – he experienced no spiritual upliftment or exhilaration in his ímán within his heart. He became perturbed. He had been fasting; he had been up at night in prayer; he had been busy with zikr

and tasbíh – but all to no effect. He went to his mother and said: "Ammáján, I have spent forty days fasting, staying awake at night in prayer and making zikr, but I have not noticed any effulgence in the ímán in my heart. I see no upliftment within myself. It appears that you had fed me some harám morsel. Some harám item had entered my system."

Just see where his gaze has focused on! Notice also what the qualities of the women were in that age.

She replied: "Dear son, never mind feeding you harám, I myself have never eaten anything harám!" Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه had such a strong conviction that he requested: "No, Ammáján, think carefully again."

The power of thought and meditation is such that if it is used correctly and sincerely, whatever shortcomings a person has, will present themselves to him.

She pondered deeply. After a few moments she said: "I have just remembered something: When I was expectant, one day when I was on the roof-balcony, I plucked a berry from the branch of our neighbour's berry-tree and ate it, without the permission of the neighbour. This I have just remembered." The neighbour had a berry tree and one branch spread over their house. Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه said: "How nice would it not be if you ask forgiveness from our neighbour." His mother felt embarrassed. "What need is there to ask to be forgiven for a mere berry?"

Nevertheless, she went to the neighbour and asked to be forgiven for having eaten that one berry without permission. Her neighbour herself was amazed and exclaimed: "Is a mere berry something to make an issue of and ask to be forgiven?" Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí's رحمة الله عليه mother said: "My son insists. Please forgive me in clear terms." The neighbour said: "I forgive you whole-heartedly!" Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí's رحمة الله عليه mother returned home and said: "Son, I went to ask for forgiveness and our neighbour has forgiven me, and she has done so very happily."

Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه again started a chillah, fasting, staying up at night in 'ibádat and making zikr. Hardly had four days elapsed when he experienced within his rúh a special effulgence, a special rúhániyet and núrániyet, whereas he had not experienced anything previously after forty days of effort. He told his mother: "My observation turned out to be

correct!"

Just ponder over this: When was the berry eaten? On the other hand we see that the situation where people are deliberately, out of choice and with knowledge aforethought eating what is harám, but their conscience does not prick them. The reason is that light has, as yet, not entered their hearts that their conscience should prick them. If one takes clean, white clothes and a speck of ink or dirt were to fall on the clothes, one would become aware of this immediately. However, if the clothes are already filthy and full of stains, how will one become aware of that speck of ink or dirt? A normal reaction should be that these clothes are very dirty – do not use them as this will be most unbecoming. Do you now understand?

كُلُوْا مِنْ طَيِّبٰتِ

Do you now understand? The condition attached is that of "tayyib" – pure and full of goodness. Eat what is tayyib – consider this to be Alláh Ta'álá's rizq. What is rizq from Alláh Ta'álá is tayyib, and what is harám is not rizq from Alláh Ta'álá. Alláh Ta'álá may have created it but it is not meant for you.

To recapitulate: Ímán has to be clothed with good deeds – these are the demands of ímán. Together with this it is necessary and compulsory to eat. It becomes necessary to adopt the means and the methods for attaining what one has to eat. What is initially wájib makes the means also wájib, so earning also becomes wájib.

Now, to earn a living in order to obtain one's rizq and food, there exist many means and methods. Amongst these is that of trade. Just as there is agriculture, artisanship and employment, there is trade as well. From my comments above, it should be apparent that this trade is also 'ibádat. This is a means of obtaining wealth, which is the means of obtaining food, which, in turn, is the means of making 'ibádat – so trade and business also become 'ibádat. This commerce is not a "worldly" activity. It cannot be categorised as "dunyá". It is also included in 'ibádat.

Virtues of an honest trader

It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has stated:

اَلتَّاجِرُالصَّدُوْقُ الْاَمِيْنُ مَعَ النَّبِيِّنَ وَالصِّدِّيْقِيْنَ وَالشُّهَدَآءِ

What more can one want? The trader – that person whom we consider to be involved in a "worldly" activity – who is truthful, honest and trustworthy will be, on the Day of Qiyámat, with the Ambiyá عليهم السلام, the pious and the martyrs. Neither has this person fought in battle and become martyred, nor has he progressed to the stage of the siddiqín. One knows what an extremely high position is that of nabúwat yet Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم states that trade is a very elevated occupation.

Doing business, many issues present contrary to one's temperament; there is much temptation towards greed and avarice in it; many do become greedy and avaricious. Turning one's tabiyet away from these temptations and pitfalls, immersing in trade with honesty and trustworthiness, is a great mujáhadah. The rule is that the greater the mujáhadah the greater the qurb-e-Iláhí. Thus, even in this trade there is that much qurb-e-Iláhí, and it is this qurb-e-Iláhí that will result in this trader being with the Ambiyá عليهم السلام, the siddiqín and the shuhadá'. The task is small, the work is not much, but the reward and status and elevation and qurb are so high.

If trade is not 'ibádat then how can there be companionship with the Ambiyá عليهم السلام, the siddiqín and the shuhadá'? The reason is that trade is a great 'ibádat. From this it is obvious that no work, no effort, of a Muslim is "worldly". Everything is Dín.

The status of the neighbour of Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه

Hadhratwálá related a qissah concerning Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه.When he passed away, somebody saw him in his dream and that he was in Jannat. He was happy and cheerful. This person asked him: "Hadhrat, how did you fare?" "Alhamdulilláh, I was forgiven," was the reply. AHadhrat, did you attain any elevated stages?" Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه replied: "Alhamdulilláh, I also managed to achieve elevated stages."

When we pass away we are presented before Haqq Ta'álá. As you know that when a criminal is apprehended there is first a pre-trial before the actual trial. When a visitor goes to the palace of a king as a guest, the visitor is first accommodated in the reception area before going to the royal court itself. Similarly, before the Day of Qiyámat, there is a "pre-trial" in the

’Álame-barzakh. These comments are in answer to the question as to how are we presented before Alláh Ta’álá? This is a brief explanation.

To continue: Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه said: “I have been forgiven and been given the glad tidings of Jannat here in the ’Álame-barzakh. I have also been granted high stages. However, I have been left behind by my fellow Muslim brother, my neighbour.” The questioner was amazed at this comment. He said: “Hadhrat, your neighbour who has passed away was not known for any special deeds. We had never seen him make any special mujáhadah, or carry out any special riyádhat, or perform any ’ibádat like staying up at night in prayer, or make an excess of nafl namáz, or keep optional fasts in abundance. We have not seen any of these. So, why has he excelled?”

Over there, realities come to the fore and present themselves. Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه replied: “The fact of the matter is this: I was alone with no responsibilities: no wife, no dependants. I was care-free. So I busied myself with communicating with Alláh Ta’álá. However, my neighbour was married and had a family to support. He was obliged to go and work so that he could support his family. Also, his nafs had certain rights on him:

اِنَّ لِنَفْسِكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا وَلِزَوْجِكَ عَلَيْكَ حَقًّا

Your nafs (life) has rights over you; your wife has rights over you.

“He was involved in his necessary ’ibádat, he kept way from harám, he fulfilled the rights others had on him, and it was on the basis of this taqwá, together with the intention and du’á that he made that ‘O Alláh, free me as you have freed Junaid, so that I can also make your ’ibádat as he is doing,’ that he achieved what he did.”

To earn what is halál tayyib is no ordinary achievement. While occupied in earning halál this was his intention. It was because of his intention that he earned this high position. Alláh Ta’álá was virtually saying: “My bondsman desired to make such ’ibádat as Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه. Even though he did not find the opportunity to do so, but he attained that reward based on his intention.”

اِنَّمَا الْاَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Deeds depend on the intention

Just ponder: To be involved in farming and watering the fields, or to be a labourer and earn in this manner and, simultaneously, make meagre 'ibádat with taqwá is a great 'ibádat. So, this trade is not "dunyá" – it is also 'ibádat and a very great 'ibádat. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم stated that the trader will be with the Ambiyá عليهم السلام, the siddiqín and the shuhadá'.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم also said that when this trader comes home tired and exhausted after a day's work – running from here to there, fetching this and that – and falls asleep at night tired out, he sleeps completely forgiven. He has performed his Ishá namáz with Jamá'at and he then performed his Fajr namáz with Jamá'at, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم states that the whole night is written down for him as 'ibádat and forgiveness!

On the night of the fifteenth of Shábán some are staying awake at night busy with nafl 'ibádat, they have visited the cemetery and recited Fátihah for the forgiveness of the deceased, but this trader, tired out from the day's work, is unable to keep awake and sleeps away, he still gets the thawáb of the virtues promised for the night of the fifteenth of Shábán!

Do you now understand what trade is?

It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has stated that when this trader, being occupied with his business the whole day, comes home in the evening and places his foot in his house the mercy of Alláh Ta'álá descends much more on him. And Alláh Ta'álá has a special muhabbat for him.

Rahá'ish, ásá'ish, zíbá'ish, numá'ish

The seeking of a livelihood has a number of degrees. The first is fardh, the second is mustahab, the third is mubáh and the fourth is harám.

That person who has nothing to eat and is in abject poverty and is destitute, for him to seek an income is fardh. This stage is referred to as Rahá'ish. This stage is fardh – to attain that much is compulsory.

If the person has sufficient to eat twice a day, but he desires to have something more, so that he can eat with some comfort, then for him to earn that much more is mustahab. This stage is referred to as ásá'ish, meaning comfort. After the stage of rahá'ish comes the stage of ásá'ish.

This will apply not only to food and drink, but will apply to clothes, to food and drink, to housing, and so forth. Applying these stages to housing we have the following: Having a small house which will provide shelter from the rain and the wind, from the cold and the heat, would be at the level of the first stage of rahá'ish: One's needs have been fulfilled. Having a house providing some comfort in addition to providing the basic necessities would fall into the next stage of ásá'ish. By the way, these words I am using were coined by Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه. He had a habit of rhyming his words.

This second stage of ásá'ish – to earn that much as to be in comfort – is mustahab. To earn so that one has more than the basic necessities and be comfortable and have the means to be at ease, will cause one to have peace of mind. The 'ibádat that is performed now will also be with peace of mind and tranquillity. Otherwise it will be the situation of:

Evil income will result in an evil heart.

And if the heart is filled with evil the person's deeds will be evil.

So, to strive in work in order to attain some comfort and ease (ásá'ish) would be mustahab.

Necessities of life: to have food, clothes and a house to stay in

The necessities of life are: to have food, clothes and a house to stay in.

The third stage is that of zíbá'ish, also referred to as zínat – elegance/ adornment. Food should be delicious as well. The clothes should be presentable as well. The house should be elegant. There is some decorative work. These features, over and above the level of comfort, are termed zínat. This would then be mubáh. A mubáh act is one for which there is neither reward nor punishment.

When I went to London, before my previous trip here to South Africa, I saw that they had carpets laid on the floors of their toilets. I was quite amazed at this, not having seeing this done before. My initial reaction was: "What unnecessary expenditure! What a waste of money!" This was just a thought. I enquired: "There are carpets in the rooms, where we walk with our shoes, but why are there carpets in the toilet as well?" My hosts explained: "Mauláná, the cold here is intense. You will find thick

wallpaper hanging on the walls and the floors will have carpets. If these were not there, and one walks barefoot on the floor, the cold enters the body and one will get sick. These are methods used to ward off the cold and to protect ourselves."

Just see: What we had thought was an act of show (numá'ish), what we had thought was an indication of pride and arrogance – may Alláh Ta'álá protect us from sin, as the thought of sin is also sin, thinking evil of others is also a sin – turned out to have a sound basis. Now I understood. The carpet was in the category of necessities. At the most it would fall in the category of ásá'ish. It does not fall into the category of zínat and zíbá'ish. However, even if it was done for beautification and for decorative purposes, then it would be mubáh.

There are thus three categories of earning discussed so far: the first of fardh, the second mustahab and the third of mubáh. Yes, the fourth category of earning would be harám.

Possibly there are those who did not know this. Is there a category of earning that is fardh, a category that is mustahab and a category that is mubáh? Offo! This is an amazing elucidation! And there is a fourth category of earning and this is harám. This category is that of numá'ish. This is to do something for show; to impress others; to do something out of pride and arrogance; to show one's high social status in the eyes of others. This is all harám. One should not have this intention. One can have any of the other three intentions – they would all be permissible. The first is fardh, the other two are permissible, that of mustahab and mubáh. There is no sin attached to these two.

One aspect that should be obvious to you after knowing the different stages is that we are referring to those earnings which are earned by halál means. One has to attain halál rizq. That is why that person who earns a living with the intention of fulfilling the wájib rights on himself, his family and dependents, so that he can feed and clothe them and, besides this, he also has the intention of, from time to time, seeing to the needs and the welfare of the poor and destitute, and also of his neighbours, that he may attend their needs and comfort, and that is the reason why he is exerting himself more and more in earning, it comes in the Hadíth Sharíf that such

a trader's face will shine more beautifully than the brilliance of the moon of the fourteenth night on the Day of Qiyámat!

So, just see: the trader sleeps in a state in which he is forgiven; Alláh Ta'álá is happy with the trader; the trader's face will outshine the brilliance of the moon of the fourteenth night on the Day of Qiyámat – but which trader is being referred to? It is that trader mentioned in the Hadíth Sharíf I had quoted:

اَلتَّاجِرُالصَّدُوْقُ الْاَمِيْنُ

It is that trader who does not betray the trust placed in him and does not deceive others during his business and transactions with others. The virtues mentioned above refer to this category of trader. Do not for a moment question: What will I sell and what will I earn by using halál means? It is stated in the Hadíth Sharíf that those earnings that have come through deceitful and impermissible means, may appear to roll in and come in abundance, but in the end the result is that of loss and destruction. There is no barkat in that wealth. Money will be seen to be coming in but how it disappears will not be perceived.

Qissah of the honest bamboo-seller

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه mentioned that there was a person in Kámpur who started a business selling bamboo. Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه had stayed in Kámpur for some time. He taught at the madrasah there for fourteen years.

This businessman had taqwá in him. The mas'alah is that if there is a fault in any item you are selling, you should reveal it to the buyer. Bamboo may have holes or various other defects. Reveal these to the customer. Similarly, clothes or other items may have defects which the customer may not be aware of. The trader knows these and he should inform the customer. According to the defect the price of the item will also be less.

So, this businessman selling bamboo used to point out to the customers that this particular bamboo had this problem, that that bamboo had this particular defect and shortcoming in it but the other bamboo was of good quality. The price of the former was less and the price of the latter was

more. Because of his forthright manner, his business was not flourishing.

The other adjacent bamboo-sellers, who did not have this taqwá and did not exercise this precaution, saw his plight and mocked at him. They commented: "Is this the way to make business, that you mention such things to the customers and do not make a sale and get no profits? This is definitely not the way to do business!" However, this bamboo-seller was of an honourable temperament and sádiqul-amín (as in the Hadíth Sharíf above) and carried on as he used to.

But, dear brothers, after the buyers developed confidence and trust in him, his business picked up and the business of the others began to wane. This person's business flourished to such an extent that the business of the others virtually collapsed. He became very wealthy. If a person acts according to the Sharí'at with taqwá, and he remains steadfast, that he should find himself in straitened conditions? This can never be!

Imám Abú Hanífah رحمة الله عليه and the roll of faulty cloth

Imám Abú Hanífah رحمة الله عليه was a cloth merchant running a flourishing business. This trade was a family trade that had been running in the family from the time of his grandfather. He had inherited his shop from his father's inheritance. The shop was huge and he had employees as well. Buyers used to come to the shop to buy but he also had a worker who used to take the cloth to the marketplace to sell.

On this one occasion a worker was sent out with some bales of cloth to sell. One roll of cloth had a defect in it. Imám Abú Hanífah رحمة الله عليه instructed the worker that if anybody wished to buy this cloth it should be pointed out to him that the cloth had a defect. The worker took the cloth and went to sell it. When the cloth was sold, this particular roll was also sold. When he returned, he gave the details of his sales to Imám Abú Hanífah رحمة الله عليه and handed over the money received. On being handed the money Imám Abú Hanífah رحمة الله عليه enquired: "When you sold that particular roll of cloth, did you reveal the defect to the buyer?" The worker said: "Hadhrat, I forgot! I did not point out the defect. I sold that cloth for such and such an amount." Imám Abú Hanífah رحمة الله عليه said: "That money has now become intermingled – halál and harám have now become mixed.

It does not behove us to utilise this money." The entire proceeds – the entire amount that had been realised from the sale of all the bales of cloth, amounting to thousands – he gave away in charity!

These virtues which have been explained, and what has been shown and proven that trade is not dunyá, that trade is also Dín, and Dín is also 'ibádat, and 'ibádat has some rules and regulations governing it. And that trader that takes all this into consideration and is involved in trade, his stage is very high. What can be higher than that one should be in the company of the Ambiyá عليهم السلام, in the company of the siddiqín, in the company of the shuhadá'; sleeping at night he is forgiven; the mercy of Alláh Ta'álá descends on him; Alláh Ta'álá shows muhabbat towards him; and on the Day of Qiyámat his face will shine brighter than the fourteenth moon?

However, my dear friends, brothers and buzurgs, having listened to the virtues working and of earning, do not criticise such personages who have restrained themselves from working. They are not involved in seeking a livelihood. The condition attached to seeking a livelihood is that it should be halál. The Hadíth Sharíf states quite categorically:

طَلَبُ كَسْبِ الْحَلَالِ فَرِيْضَةٌ بَعْدَ الْفَرِيْضَةِ

Seeking of a halál livelihood is fardh after the fardh of 'ibádat.

It is apparent that the basic fardh is the fardh of 'ibádat. And seeking a livelihood is merely an instrument to fulfil the fardh of 'ibádat. And it should not happen that what is the means is made into the primary objective, and the primary objective is relegated to a secondary position, that the primary objective of 'ibádat is discarded and one is occupied mainly in trade. This is topsy-turvy – the objective has been discarded and the means has been made into the objective; what is primary is made secondary and what is secondary is made primary.

For example: When we wake up in the morning, our first fardh is this that we should cleanse ourselves by means of wudhú and proceed to the masjid – provided that the masjid is not at a distance – and perform our Fajr namáz with Jamá'at. The order for namáz is that whichever namáz that we have been ordered to perform – the five obligatory prayers – should

be performed in whatever time – the stipulated times – in the prescribed manner – with Jamá'at – in whichever place – in the masjid – provided that there is no Shar'í excuse. This is the order we have to obey first on waking up in the morning. Thereafter we have to fulfil the other fardh of seeking a livelihood by involving ourselves in work.

The status of tawakkul is higher

However, if some bandah of Alláh Ta'álá keeps himself occupied only in the fardh of 'ibádat and pays no attention to seeking a halál livelihood – how can a person be engaged in two occupations at the same time? – and he is a záhid, one should not level any criticism at him, as we see being done. People say: "What has happened to him that he has broken his arms and legs and sits in the masjid? Can't he go out and work? We have heard many virtues of earning a livelihood."

Undoubtedly, that is true. For me and you this is true. However, for that person in whose heart Alláh Ta'álá has instilled the strength of taqwá – that person whose gaze is not on means – and he does not utilise these and, with strength of heart, he places his trust completely on Alláh Ta'álá – which is termed tawakkul, for which there are certain pre-conditions, which he has attained already – his status is much higher than the one going out to seek a livelihood. It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf that that person who is so busy in the tiláwat of the Qur'án Sharíf that he has not one free moment from his tiláwat, Alláh Ta'álá says that he has no need to earn a livelihood and that He will be sufficient to see to his needs, to that extent that he does not even need to free himself to make du'á. Du'á is also a methodology. Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "Do not even make du'á. I am sufficient for you."

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللهِ ۚ وَكَفٰى بِاللهِ وَكِيْلًا ۝

And put your trust in Alláh. Alláh is sufficient as Trustee. (S.33.48.)

The status of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is very high and noble. One should think twice before criticising. What work did he undertake? Before nabúwat, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم used to take the goods of Hadhrat Khadíjah رضى الله تعالى عنها and sold these for her, but after nabúwat can anybody prove his going out to earn a living? What trade was he involved in? What agricultural activity

did he undertake? Whose employment did he seek? What profession or method did he employ to accumulate wealth? None. It was "tawakkul-alalláh".

Among the Ná'ibáne-Rasúl, if such representatives are to be found in the ummat, if they and those associated with them – their wives and their children – have in their hearts this strength of tawakkul-alalláh, then nobody can criticise them. Nobody can find fault with them. They do not go out to earn a living, but do not criticise them. Should they ever come to your door to beg from, you may feel justified in telling them off, but remember that you will be destroying your Dín. In fact, they do not go to anybody to beg, because then how could this be tawakkul-alalláh? To go to somebody's threshold is contrary to the concept of tawakkul-alalláh. At times a weakness does creep in and mistakes are made. Two qissas come to mind.

Lesson from a dog on tawakkul

This qissah appears in one of the Arabic kitábs: "Nafhatul Yemen".

One person opted for tawakkul-alalláh and went into the mountains to spend his life in 'ibádat. Food kept on coming to him. Alláh Ta'álá placed a test on him and the food stopped coming. One mealtime passed without any food. The second mealtime passed without any food. The third mealtime also passed but still no food. This person became gabbrified – worried and anxious.

In this unsettled state he came down the mountain and went to the nearby town. He approached the house of a Christian woman and asked for food. She gave him three rotís. Taking these, he started walking away from the house. The Christian woman had a dog. The dog followed him. As they reached the outskirts of the town the dog started barking at him and leapt at him as if he wanted to bite him on his leg. The buzurg threw down one rotí at the dog. The dog went after the rotí and started to eat it. As soon as it had eaten the rotí the dog went after him again. Barking again he charged for his leg. The buzurg threw another rotí at him. The dog ate the second rotí and charged after him again. The buzurg, in his fright, threw the last rotí at him. He had received three rotís and he lost all three rotís,

having thrown all three to the dog. The dog ate the third rotí and again charged at him.

The dog was on the point of biting him when this ábed addressed the dog: “O shameless creature! I had obtained three rotís from the house of your owner and I have given all three to you, so why do you still wish to attack me, O shameless one?” Alláh Ta’álá wanted the buzurg to learn a lesson and gave the dog the power of speech. The dog said: “Am I shameless or are you shameless? I had chosen to lie at the threshold of my master’s house and there were many a time when my master forgot to give me food. At times, days went by without my receiving any food, but I never left the threshold of my master. But you, having missed out on merely three meals, left the threshold of your real Master and came begging to the door of my master! Am I shameless or are you shameless?” Alláh Ta’álá taught him a lesson through the dog. This also happens.

Each according to his status

Hadhrat Ibráhím Bin Adham رحمة الله عليه was a king. He is a well-known figure. Ask him what did he attain by giving up his kingdom and choosing the Path of Faqír (the path of the Mendicants – i.e. Tasawwuf). He had tasted the delight of both these domains. The wazír had approached him to resume his kingship, saying: “The door is still open for you to rule. Please return.” He had replied: “I have no need of it.” He must have found a better substitute.

He carried on along his journey. Night came and he stopped over at a particular spot. Alláh Ta’álá sent some food for him. The food was very delicious, of high quality and very fragrant. In the same vicinity there lived on the mountainside another poor buzurg. He had been there for several years. Alláh Ta’álá used to send him food daily as well but his food was very simple. On witnessing what had been sent to Hadhrat Ibráhím Bin Adham رحمة الله عليه, he thought to himself: “I have been here for so many years, having left off worldly affairs – having become a tárike-dunyá – I have been engaged in the ’ibádat of Alláh Ta’álá, and I get only simple food whereas that person is having food so delicious and appetising that its aroma is reaching me even!”

Very perplexed, he addressed Alláh Ta'álá: "Wáh, Alláh-Mia, Wáh! I am an 'ábed for so many years and I receive only this food, whereas that person just came today and he has such delicious and excellent food?" Alláh Ta'álá instilled into his heart by way of ilhám: "That is correct. You have just seen the superficial aspect. You have not taken account into account who he was and who you were."

Let me just digress to point out the following: People speak of "equality". The cry is: "Equality! Equality!" Equality is not a factor even by Alláh Ta'álá. Even He does not deal with everybody on an equal basis. He is the Kháliq of everybody and deals with everybody according to his status, taking into account factors like temperament and disposition.

To continue: Alláh Ta'álá went on: "He was a king. He set aside his crown for My sake. You, on the other hand, were a grass-cutter, earning your livelihood by cutting grass. This food you are receiving is far better than what you used to eat. This other person, what he has left aside, how will he tolerate the food you are eating? If you are unhappy, your hoe and basket which you had left behind, are still there. You may climb off the mountainside, reclaim your hoe and basket, cut grass and sell it and eat!"

However, having being making the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá for so long, there had developed a very beautiful relationship with Alláh Ta'álá. This person became penitent: "I have erred. I had not realised what the real situation was."

What work was he doing? None. He was assisted by Alláh Ta'álá from the unseen. If a person has tawakkul-alalláh, with strength of heart in oneself and those connected to one, then it is not necessary to adopt any external means of livelihood. To the contrary, these are people who are there to distribute – to take and give the best of things to others and not to take for themselves. I am attempting to refute a criticism. People tend to say: "Whatever people we have seen who are muttaqí and parezghár, we have seen that they are dying of hunger. Neither do they possess proper food nor do they have presentable clothes, nor a decent house to stay in! What type of muttaqí, what type of auliyá-Alláh, what type of Alláh-wálá are they? We are better off than them. If Alláh Ta'álá was pleased with them

then He would have given them more than us."

Being Muslim, for a Muslim to make such statements...? This is similar to the statements hurled at Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم by the kuffár of the Quraish of Makkah. One should make taubah. For a káfir to mouth such statements is to be expected, but for a mu'min to say such things...? Remember very well that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had no shortages. He was told: "If you so wish, I will convert the mountains of Uhud into gold for you." His reply was: "No. I prefer to eat at one time and the kitchen fire should be cold at another." There was a reason for this also. However, the point is that Alláh Ta'álá made the offer to him, but the bondsman, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, was not in favour.

Similarly, as for the auliyá-Alláh – those who are true walís – they have no shortages. But they themselves decline. Why get involved in arguments and fights? Why take on the burden of keeping accounts? Why take on the worry of having to make qurbání and pay zakát? Then is the worry of spending the money correctly. These are distractions, diverting attention in another direction. Seeing their weaknesses they make du'á: "O Alláh! We do not desire wealth." Alláh Ta'álá wanted to give them, but they declined.

On the other hand there were such bandas of Alláh Ta'álá, auliyá-Alláh, to whom Alláh Ta'álá offered wealth and their response was: "Certainly, I will gladly accept! I shall keep proper records. I will see to the poor and destitute, fulfil my obligations of qurbání, fitrah and zakát. I will attend to the destitute and see to their needs and welfare. Bring forth Your bounties."

Abdul Qádir Jilání رحمة الله عليه buys an expensive material

Gauthe -Pák, Sheikh Abdul Qádir Jilání رحمة الله عليه, was blessed by Alláh Ta'álá with a great deal of wealth and he accepted. He used to eat murg-pulao – a chicken and rice delicacy – daily. It is well known among the auliyá-Alláh that the excellent food he ate and exquisite clothes he wore, no other walí has ever ate or worn. There is an incident related about him:

A cloth merchant went to the king to sell some cloth. This material was so expensive that the king could not afford to buy it from his personal funds. The merchant left without the king buying the cloth. Being in Baghdád, the

merchant decided to pay a visit to Gauthe-Pák, Sheikh Abdul Qádir Jilání رحمة الله عليه. During the course of their conversation Gauthe-Pák رحمة الله عليه asked him the reason for his visit to Baghdád. The merchant explained that it was a business trip. What was he selling? Cloth. Gauthe-Pák رحمة الله عليه requested him to bring forth his material so that he could also see it.

When he saw the cloth it so happened that it was the very cloth the king could not afford to buy because of insufficient funds, Gauthe-Pák رحمة الله عليه expressed the wish to buy it. The merchant said: "Huzúr! Forgive me for saying this, but this cloth is so expensive that even the king could not afford to buy it." Gauthe-Pák رحمة الله عليه could afford it and he gave him the required sum and bought the material. The tailor was then summoned and the cloth was given to him to sew a chogah for him.

The king came to know of this whole affair and he became infuriated. He told the wazír: "What I could not afford to buy, Abdul Qádir has bought? This is an insult to me! Go and question him about it!" The wazír went and met Gauthe-Pák رحمة الله عليه.

They were still sitting and chatting when the khádim-e-khás came and addressed Gauthe-Pák رحمة الله عليه: "Huzúr! That cloth that you had given for the chogah to be sewn is insufficient and there is not enough material to complete the one sleeve. How shall we complete the sewing of the sleeve?" Gauthe-Pák رحمة الله عليه said: "Is that so? Well, it is not a problem. Go to my room and you will find lying there a piece of hessian cloth. Take this hessian to the tailor and tell him to join it up to complete the sleeve."

Just ponder: What was the quality and value of that material and what was the quality and value of the hessian? But in his eyes, gold and silver were equal to pieces of broken clay-pot. He did not buy the cloth for purpose of showing off, for numá'ish. Just now I had explained to you the four different levels. He bought it for refreshing the rúháníyet of the heart and as a sign of Shukr for a blessing that was showered on him by Alláh Ta'álá.

It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf words to the effect that Alláh Ta'álá states: "When I see on my bondsman the effects of My blessings, then I am happy with him." Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has pointed out that when Alláh Ta'álá sees the effects of His ne'mats on the body of his bondsman He becomes happy. This person has valued the ne'mat.

The wazír became anxious and frightened. He thought to himself: "Is this person one to be questioned on his actions? In his eyes the expensive cloth and the hessian held equal value. No. He did not buy the cloth out of pride and conceit or out of arrogance. He had a ne'mat of Alláh Ta'álá with him and he bought it to express his shukr-lilláh." He remained silent and did not pursue the matter.

When he returned he told the king: "Huzúr, there is a major difference in temperaments between us and him in regard to niyet." "What is that?" the king asked. The wazír said: "Such an expensive piece of cloth, which you yourself saw, was sewn into a chogah but there was not enough material to complete the sleeve. Hadhrat then instructed, 'Take that piece of hessian cloth and join it up.'" The king was also completely amazed at hearing this.

The excellent food that Hadhrat Gauthe-Pák رحمة الله عليه had eaten and the fine clothes that he had worn were unmatched by others. And what was his status? He was among the great auliyá-Alláh: His status was higher than that of the 'abdáls. In fact, the rank of 'abdáliyet is distributed from the Gauth.

The piety of Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمة الله عليه

The honoured father of our Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه [i.e. the father of Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمة الله عليه] was a landowner and had some good properties. After his demise, when the properties had to be distributed, there arose some doubt in Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه concerning the share that he would inherit. He asked Mauláná Rashíd Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه on the permissibility of taking the property. Mauláná Rashíd Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه replied: "If you take it, it is a fatwá, and if you do not take it is taqwá."

[That is, the legal ruling would be that it is permissible to take the property, but not to take the property would be an act of piety.]

Consequently Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه did not take the property. For a short time he also suffered abject poverty. So much so that visitors used to come and were fed while husband and wife went to bed without food. Such a time was also experienced. However, thereafter, dear brethren, when the

ne'mats of Alláh Ta'álá started showering, it was like royalty! Once, a very large sum of money came to him. Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه became anxious and worried. "What shall I do with this?" he exclaimed anxiously. After some thought he said: "My heart desires that I send one thousand rupees to Deoband Madrasah and one thousand rupees to Saháranpur Madrasah."

What was the level of Hadhratwálá's fairness and justice? These were of the highest degree. His taqwá was of a very elevated level. His life was led at a very high level of caution and vigilance. Yet, what trade was he involved in? What agricultural activity did he undertake? Whose employment was he in at a later stage? Where was there a desire to accumulate wealth? Where was there any sign of greed and avarice? He distributed everything. The poor of Thánah Bhawan, orphans and widows were given a monthly allowance, which was noted down in a book. Some came forward to collect this allowance themselves; others had the allowance sent to their homes.

His fairness and justice – qissah of the two melons

What was his fairness and justice like? Alláhu-Akbar! Once a peasant farmer brought two melons and gave it to Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه: "One was enough. Why was it necessary to bring two?" In the simple straightforward manner of the rural people the peasant replied: "Who does not know that you have two wives? The one is for the one wife and the other is for the other." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "Very well. But, dear brother, they should be exactly equal."

Just take note that the melons should be exactly equal in order that the one wife receives exactly the same as the other wife.

Many people have a great desire to marry a second wife. In fact, Barí-Píráni Sáhibáh – Hadhratwálá's رحمة الله عليه first wife – once remarked to Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه: "By marrying a second wife you have opened the road for your murídín to marry second wives also!" Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه replied: "To the contrary, I have closed the road!" She said: "Closed the road? In what manner?" Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "My murídín witness all the time how I treat both of you with complete fairness and justice. Every item is shared equally between the two of you. If some parcel is tied in a string and is given to me then the item is divided equally. For measuring there is a scale

present in the khánqáh. Also, that very string is cut and given equally to the two of you. What goes to one goes to the other."

Nowadays even one wife is not treated with fairness and justice, so how will justice be done between two wives?

To continue: The peasant responded: "I know you. You are particular about being equal therefore I have weighed both melons before coming. You can weigh them and see for yourself. There is your scale." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه weighed the melons and, really, they were of equal weight! Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه then said: "Fine. They are of equal weight. But show me, out of the two which is the sweeter one and which is not so sweet?"

Just ponder: To what degree is there fairness and justice? To what extent is there mujáhadah with the nafs? To what extent is there riyádhat? How much effort is not undertaken?

The peasant said: "You draw very fine lines! Did I thrust myself into them? I do not know." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "Not to worry." He took a knife and cut both the melons in half, setting one half of each melon into the one pan of the scale and the other half of each melon into the other pan. Adjusting them until they were equal he sent one set to the one wife and the other set to the other wife. Now there was equality. What an extremely high level of taqwá does this not demonstrate!

There are certain topics that are not suitable to be discussed in public gatherings, but the mashá'ikh will mention them. Mauláná Gangohí رحمة الله عليه had discussed some amazing topics in his majális, topics that appear to be contrary to modesty. In any case, what has been narrated above is amazing in itself. Yet there is more. I am attempting to show you the qualities of our akábir who preceded us.

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه used to say – and in this there was no boasting but an invitation to simulate: "When I am having marital relations with my one wife I consider it harám to hold the picture in my mind of my second wife at that particular time – I make sure that a mental image of her should not come." Hadhratwálá's رحمة الله عليه one wife was a bit elderly and the second wife was of a younger, youthful age. There is a big difference in the mental images and the imaginings pertaining to the two. Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه used to say: "These are very fine points. To control one's thoughts is very

difficult. But I consider it to be harám and I avoid this visualising."

Of course, the other mas'alah is in its place, namely that the gaze of a person, coming from the shopping centre, falls on some attractive and beautiful woman and her image now sits in his brain and at night or at any other time, he has marital relations with his wife, and he brings forth that image to ignite and increase his passion. Though he is having relations with his wife, yet he is guilty of having committed the sin of ziná! Yes, he has committed the sin of ziná!

Sháh Abdul-Quddus Gangohí رحمة الله عليه and the ta'wíz of barkat

To continue: We were discussing the topic of asbáb (means). If certain personages have not made use of the asbáb and have not resorted to the recognised methods of earning a livelihood, we should not criticise them. They have no need of using means. Their lives were that of tawakkul. Their wives and children were also on tawakkul.

Sháh Abdul-Quddus Gangohí رحمة الله عليه at times had no food to eat. Occasionally he used to go into the house and then sit down and say to himself: "It is the misfortune of Abdul-Quddus that he has to stay hungry because of his sins, but the wife is also staying hungry." Very occasionally his wife used to complain and he used to reassure her: "Make a little sabr – have patience and fortitude. Excellent and delicious food is being prepared in Jannat!"

If we were to say the same thing to our wives, they would say: "What is being prepared in Jannat you eat – give me my food here to eat!" However, his wife was also of that calibre and level of tawakkul and she was also able to dispense with means.

Once it so happened that Sháh Abdul-Quddus رحمة الله عليه was away on a journey and his sheikh came to visit. At the time there was no food in the house to eat at all. The servant scurried about here and there hoping to find some flour. The sheikh sensed something was not right. He enquired: "What is the problem?" She said: "Huzúr, there is nothing to eat. I am trying to find some flour." He took out a rupee and gave it to her. "Go and buy some flour and prepare something. I shall then eat." She did this and he ate what was prepared. He then wrote out a ta'wíz and said: "Place this in what you

have bought. In-shá-Alláh, there will be barkat." He then left.

In the days that followed there was food twice a day. A worried Sháh Abdul-Quddus رحمة الله عليه asked his wife: "What is happening? Why are we not without food?" She explained: "Your sheikh came the day you were gone out. There was no food in the house. He gave some money for food and left a ta'wíz to be placed in the grain. This is the barkat of that ta'wíz." Sháh Abdul-Quddus رحمة الله عليه said: "Is that so? It is disrespectful to keep such a ta'wíz in the grain. It deserves to be kept on my head and not in the grain. Where is it?" He went inside and took it out and placed it in the turban on his head. After a few days the grain was used up.

Mauláná Rashíd Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه is given a kímiyá

Mauláná Rashíd Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه was given a kímiyá by a majzúb. Mauláná Rashíd Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه took it and placed it on a shelf in the house. The majzúb passed by a few days later and commented drily to Mauláná Rashíd Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه: "Wáh, molví! Wáh! You have lost it, haven't you?" When Mauláná went to check he found that, in fact, it was missing! Somebody had thought that it was just an ordinary bit of grass and threw it away!

These were our akábir buzurgs! Their gaze was not in this direction but directed at tawakkul. They were ones who distributed and did not accumulate.

I shall end off by relating a few other qissas:

Sháh Álimgír رحمة الله عليه and his brother, Dárá Shiku

After Sháh Jahán, his son Sháh Álimgír رحمة الله عليه was due to take over the throne. His brother, Dárá Shiku, felt he should be the one to wear the crown instead. Dárá Shiku went to visit a buzurg. The buzurg welcomed him and, shifting from the quilt on which he was sitting, requested the young prince to come and sit there.

The buzurg was acting according to the Hadíth Sharíf which states that one should treat every person according to his status. Dárá Shiku declined: "Huzúr! Who am I?"

Out of respect for the buzurg he was hesitant to sit at the sitting place of

the buzurg, on his very quilt, whereas one should not be rash enough to refuse. One should obey as instructed – there is goodness in this. But Dárá Shiku did not do this and he went to sit in front facing the buzurg.

They conversed with one another. As Dárá Shiku took his leave he requested: "Huzúr! Make du'á that I receive the crown and that I become the king." The buzurg replied: "That was my wish as well but what can I do...? Anyhow, very well, I shall make du'á for you."

He did not want to hurt his feelings – anybody's feelings. Hurting people's feelings was something he could never do. "Very well. I shall make du'á for you." Dárá Shiku departed.

Sháh Álimgír رحمة الله عليه came to find out about his brother's visit to the buzurg. Sháh Álimgír رحمة الله عليه was a great muhaddith. He also went to pay a visit to the buzurg. The buzurg saw the prince enter and again shifted from his quilt and said: "Honoured Prince, come and sit here." Sháh Álimgír رحمة الله عليه did not hesitate. "Very well." He went to sit on the quilt that the buzurg had vacated for him. They conversed with one another. As Sháh Álimgír رحمة الله عليه took his leave he requested: "Huzúr! It is my desire that I receive the crown and become ruler." The buzurg replied: "You have it already!"

In what way? The buzurg had offered him his quilt to sit on and he had done so! Sháh Álimgír رحمة الله عليه instantly saw the relationship. He quickly said: "Hadhrat, this is only one half of it and not the whole. I may have the throne but I have not been crowned." The buzurg replied: "Bháí, that is not in my hands. That slave of yours – the one that fills water in a jug for you to make wudhú – it is in his hands." Sháh Álimgír رحمة الله عليه thanked him and departed.

On reaching home he immediately ordered his slave: "Bring water for me to make wudhú!" The slave brought the water. Sháh 'Álamgír رحمة الله عليه took off the turban from his head and placed it on one side on a pedestal and he performed his wudhú. On completing his wudhú he ordered the slave: "Take this turban of mine and place it on my head!" The slave said: "Huzúr! Have mercy on me! Please excuse me, as I have never done it before. Your honoured turban should be touched by my lowly hands..?" Sháh 'Álamgír رحمة الله عليه spoke in a severe tone: "I order you to do it! Take it and place it on

my head!" The slave had no option but to obey the command. "Very well." He took the turban and placed on Sháh 'Álamgír's رحمة الله عليه head. The slave then said: "You received the throne over there and you have received the crown over here. However, our secrets have been exposed. It is not proper that I remain here. Huzúr, I request you to set me free." Sháh 'Álamgír رحمة الله عليه said: "I am setting you free. You may go."

Who was this unknown person? A mere slave! What was in his power? The authority to crown! The throne was given by the one buzurg over there and the crown was received from the one over here. Yet, neither of the two had any worldly occupation. They were not doing any farming. They were not involved in business and trade. They were not employees. Their stage and level was that of tawakkul-alalláh.

Sháh Abdul Azíz رحمة الله عليه and the English Governor

It was during the time of British rule in India that the English Governor came to meet Sháh Abdul Azíz رحمة الله عليه, the son of Sháh Walíyulláh رحمة الله عليه. The Governor's head had no rúháníyet in it but was filled only with materialism. Sháh Abdul Azíz رحمة الله عليه was never involved in any business or sought any employment, yet had no lack of food. The Governor was quick to notice that he had no obvious sources of income and of sustenance, so he asked: "How do you manage to eat?" Sháh Abdul Azíz رحمة الله عليه evaded the question and gave no reply. Later, when about to leave, the Governor took out some silver coins from his pocket and presented them to Sháh Abdul Azíz رحمة الله عليه, saying: "Huzúr, please accept this gift."Sháh Abdul Azíz رحمة الله عليه said: "Very well." He took the money and immediately remarked: "This is how I eat!"

Sháh Abdul Qádir Sáhib رحمة الله عليه refuses a gift

Sháh Abdul Qádir Sáhib رحمة الله عليه is among those personages who had no worldly occupation but who lived a royal life. A person brought a collection of koryá to Sháhsáhib, who thought to himself: "This appears to be a poor person. How can I take these koryá from him?" He did not take the gift. This person left, taking his gift with him.

Subsequent to this, the presents and gifts that used to pour in, ceased.

A stage came when Sháhsáhib had no food even. He thought to himself: "What has happened?" The answer suddenly struck him: "That person who had brought the koryá which I refused to take – I hurt his feelings! This is a result of that refusal of mine!"

He sent his servant to call this person. When he came Sháhsáhib said to him: "Bháí, at that time you gladly brought it. Now I am actually begging for it." This person said: "Hadhrat, I had brought it out of pure muhabbat. I had meticulously collected the koryá one by one for you. When Hadhrat refused, I thought I would wait for the opportunity and present it to you again at a more appropriate occasion. Although I have had need for it, I have not touched it and have kept it intact." Sháhsáhib said: "Bháí, go and bring it." He brought it and Sháhsáhib accepted it.

The paths opened up again. Sháhsáhib was involved in the work of Dín. He was involved in serving the Dín of Alláh Ta'álá with sincerity and honesty and Alláh Ta'álá opened the paths for him again. Whosoever becomes Alláh's, Alláh Ta'álá becomes his.

A sincere student's arrangements for food

Qárí Pánípat رحمة الله عليه was well known for his qirá'at. Initially he was a qárí only, but later became a molví as well. A mauláná went to him to learn qirá'at. Qárísáhib told him: "Bháí, first make arrangements for your meals and then come for your lessons." The mauláná said: "Huzúr, I have come to correct my tajwíd of the Qur'án Sharíf, purely for the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá. Food He will give. I am not requesting you for food. I merely request you to teach me." Qárísáhib acceded, "Very well."

One mealtime came and went and a second mealtime came and went, but there was no food forthcoming. The people in the neighbourhood were also not bothered. After taking his lesson the mauláná went to stay in the nearby masjid. It so happened that one person in the neighbourhood passed away.

This qissah was related to us by Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه. He also made the following pertinent and concise statements: "There should be ikhlás for the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá. If there is ikhlás where can there be iflás (poverty)? Where there is khulús (sincerity) there is much fulús (money)."

There was a local custom to feed the needy for forty days whenever anyone passes away. Otherwise nobody bothered about caring for the mauláná. The mauláná ate well for these forty days. At times he was sent some halwá, at other times some meat and rotí, and so forth.

When the forty days were over, news came that somebody else had passed away. Again there was food for the next forty days! When these forty days came to an end, news again came that somebody else had passed away! The people in the neighbourhood came to realise that every forty days somebody was passing away! They said: "Let us make arrangements for meals for the youngster or else everybody in the neighbourhood will die off!" The arrangements were made and thereafter the sequence of deaths stopped! It was as if Alláh Ta'álá was saying: "If you do not make arrangements for such a bondsman of Mine, I will make the arrangements through your hands!"

In conclusion

What I had said initially was that seeking a halál earning is fardh after the other fará'idh is for me and you. This does not apply to those who are true Ná'ib-e-Rasúl those who have khulús in the true sense of the word, who have tawakkul, with the necessary strength of heart in themselves and those connected to them. These means, whether of trade or agriculture or employment, are asbábe-ghair-ádiyah – means that are habits but not necessities. It is not an absolute rule that earnings will only accrue through trade, farming and employment. That is why one should not criticise those who dispense with these means.

The áyát and the Hadíth Sharíf that I have quoted are for me and you. I have tried to show that many talks and lectures have been given on the topics of wudhú, namáz and rozah, but concerning clothes and food, which we consider to be "worldly" topics, not much has been said. It is apparent that these are not worldly topics but form very much part of Dín.

It is the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá that I have managed to discuss these topics. It is also a manifestation of your muhabbat and khulús. Those who know me know how very weak I am and that I suffer from dizzy spells and am unable to sit for long periods.

Today I have discussed briefly the subject of earning halál and the associated virtues. Do not consider it to be dunyá but consider it to be Dín, making sure that you have the niyet of earning by halál means. In the gaze of Alláh Ta'álá that trader will be a loved one; it will also be a source of showering of blessings; it will be a means of being forgiven as well, as he sleeps at night exhausted from his day's efforts. On the Day of Qiyámat his face will be shining bright like that of the glittering moon. It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf that nine parts of rahmat and barkat are kept in trade and one part in other occupations. You have also seen that the status of the Ambiyá عليهم السلام, the shuhadá' and the siddiqín are attained by this trader, provided that he is earning halál. From this you will realise that, as far as we are concerned, for a mu'min everything is Dín and not dunyá.

Alláh Ta'álá has stated:

يٰأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا كُلُوْا مِنْ طَيِّبٰتِ مَارَزَقْنَاكُمْ

O you who Believe! Eat what is tayyib (pure, delicious and of high quality) which We have provided for you. (S.2.172.)

On this I had said that garments should also be "delicious", homes should also be "delicious". I had explained to you the four levels as well.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had said:

طَلَبُ كَسْبِ الْحَلَالِ فَرِيْضَةٌ بَعْدَ الْفَرِيْضَةِ

Seeking a halál livelihood is compulsory after the fundamental fará'idh of 'ibádat.

I had also said that the effects of harám, the results of harám, are not good. The núrániyet that is produced by halál is not produced by harám. Therefore, when keeping rozah, if a person has harám or doubtful wealth, he should rather borrow halál tayyib money as a loan to buy his food. Also, the loan should be taken from a non-Muslim, so that at least in Ramadhán his food that is ingested at the time of sehrí and iftár is halál.

In discussing in front of you the topic of earning a worldly livelihood, I have explained that this is Dín and not dunyá. Every task of a Muslim is Dín and not dunyá.

I end off by making du'á that Alláh Ta'álá grant you and me the taufíq to

earn halál and grant us the taufíq to abstain from harám.

آمِيْن يَا رَبَّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ وَصَلَّى اللهُ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَامُحَمّدٍ وَاٰلِهٖ وَسَلَّمَ

فِيْ اَمَانَاللهِ

Khudá háfiz.

BOOKLET NUMBER SIXTEEN
Jamádul-Ukhrá 1425 - August 2004

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh, once again, solely through the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh رحمة الله عليه -also, not forgetting the valued du'ás of our readers – this sixteenth discourse is ready.

Among the many challenges facing the Muslims is that of assessing the flood of Islámic information that is presented to them. This information comes from non-Muslim sources, in the mass media, as well as from Muslim sources. We have lectures, periodicals, newspapers, radio stations and also an abundance of Islámic websites on the internet. How does one sift out the truth from the false, the good from the bad?

An 'álim once put the question to Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه and put it thus: We do not have the time to go through each and every book that we come across, so how do know that the book is reliable? The reply given was that we should be thoroughly familiar with our own religion and school of thought. Then, whatever is contrary to this had to be treated with caution. In-shá-Alláh Ta'álá, following this advice will be of great assistance to all of us in dealing with the vast amount of information that we are bombarded with.

Another important point to bear in mind is the following: Looking at the correspondence of those who used to write to Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه, one notices that time and again the du'á

made and the advice given is to develop istiqámat.

What is istiqámat? The dictionary meanings of istiqámat are: "firmness; stability; constancy; steadfastness; rectitude; uprightness." The word also implies carrying out tasks correctly and perfectly. The message conveyed is that one should carry out tasks perfectly, constantly and with steadfastness, even though the quantity is small. The emphasis is on quality rather than quantity; on constancy and continuity rather than impulsiveness.

The majlis being presented to you should be viewed bearing the above in mind. In this majlis a variety of topics are discussed by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. The topics discussed are important for all of us. This majlis was conducted in South Africa, given it an added importance as the topics discussed pertain more to us and others like us who live as Muslim minorities in westernised countries.

Several topics are emphasised over and over again. The purpose is to develop istiqámat in the sálik: the sálik may have heard a topic discussed previously, but the importance may have escaped his notice. By discussing the topic again, its importance is brought out. It is an occasion for the sálik to look at himself whether he has brought that particular aspect into his/ her life and whether there is perfection and constancy in carrying that task. In this way, the sálik progresses step by step, stage by stage, but, under the guidance of his sheikh he reaches his/ her destination.

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us all the taufíq to follow the teachings of our Sheikh رحمة الله عليه. May Alláh Ta'álá save us from being swayed this way and that way by all the different winds that are blowing around us.

Ámín.

Dr. I.M.

[This majlis was conducted by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه *in South Africa, most probably in the year 1982 or 1984]*

ENTER INTO ISLÁM FULLY

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحْمَدَهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْاادْخُلُوْا فِي السِّلْمِ كَآ فَّةً ۖ وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوْا خُطُوٰتِ الشَّيْطٰنِ ۭ

O you who believe! Enter into Islam completely [and perfectly] and do not follow the footsteps of Shaitán. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy (S.2.208.)

Fulfilling promises

Before this, by the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá, and the focused attention, du'ás and the sincerity of intentions of all you honoured people here – before going on to narrate something in connection with this áyate-karímah – it is appropriate to say that, it was brought to my attention at about two o'clock or half-past two, that a majlis or a bayán shall take place. At the time of namáz I had no knowledge of having to deliver a bayán. That is why I was unperturbed. Zuhr namáz was performed in another masjid. When returning from there, as I was about to go upstairs to my room, it was indicated to me to proceed to a room downstairs. Thinking that some arrangements had been made for tea, I came this way. I do not eat any lunch. Whatever my habit is at home, that is my habit away from home, whether it concerns my ma'múlát or my eating habits. There, in the room, a dastarkhán was laid, some cold refreshments were served, what you call "ice-cream" – very delicious! I partook a very little of it and drank a very small amount of tea, not even a quarter cup.

We were in haste to come here seeing that word had been dropped into my ear about this majlis, because it is not decent that, when a written or verbal promise has been made to someone, when one has committed oneself, to act contrary to it. My temperament feels ashamed. It is a human, Shar'í and natural demand that a person should carefully weigh a promise before committing oneself and, once one has committed oneself, one should fulfil the promise.

Punctuality as far as time is concerned, my honoured friends, is an Islámic teaching. We have absolutely no need to take from others any aspects, whether they relate to matters intellectual, temperamental, Shar'í or common law. What is there lacking in our home, Islám? Each and every

facet and every situation have been set forth in detail. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has not neglected to comment on every topic for his ummat. Whatever was of benefit, or could be of benefit, from whatever aspect – not only on aspects of 'ibádat, but also on matters concerning mu'ásharat has been narrated.

Our thinking is that Islám is only concerned with namáz and rozah, these few necessary acts of 'ibádat. This has become the general attitude amongst our people. But this is not the case. From the time of one's birth till the time that one enters the grave, and whatever is going to transpire in the grave till the time of Qiyámat, and then till entry into Jannat or Jahannam and the conditions to be found there – that is, from birth till one's final abode in the hereafter – have all been narrated. We have absolutely no need to ask any other individual, any other nation, any other country, concerning anything connected to any aspect of our lives.

Istinjá – its method

Take a simple act like istinjá – cleansing oneself after answering the call of nature: we have been taught even its method. From here we can assess that other (more important) aspects will definitely have been narrated. Besides the thawáb and reward we will be earning in the hereafter – this being our basic intention, that Alláh Ta'álá should be pleased with us, this being our aim and objective in every each of our actions. Nevertheless, other benefits also accrue.

With regard to istinjá, we have been shown and taught even its method: Do not stand and urinate; squat and urinate; when squatting select a spot that is elevated (if one had to urinate in an open place); if the spot is low, urinate in such a manner that urine-drops does not splash back on you but gets quickly absorbed into the ground. If drops of urine are allowed to splash onto one's trouser-legs, or feet or shoes then, after death, one will be liable for punishment in the grave as well.

Punishment in the grave

You may be aware or may have heard that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, accompanied by some of his sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم, was passing by a qabrastán, when he

suddenly stood still and commanded: “Bring two green twigs.” These were brought. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم planted the one on one of the graves and planted the other on another grave, letting them stand erect. The sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم enquired: “O Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, why have you done this? We have never seen you do this before.” Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم said: “The person buried here, lying in this grave, is being punished. The reason is that he did not take care to protect himself from drops of urine splashing onto him. And this other grave that is here is of that person who was a tale-bearer. He is being punished because of his tale-bearing.”

Tale-bearing – definition and a qissah

I am sure that you know what is tale-bearing: A person goes to another and tells him: “This other person said such and such about you. This is harmful to your interests.” He then goes to the other person and tells him: “I am sure that you know that your so-called friend is scheming up plans to harm you and saying such and such about you.”

This is called tale-bearing. In this matter today’s world has advanced a great deal! To create disunity and discord has become our profession. To bring about unity or strengthen any existing bond is something that we have distanced ourselves from. Tale-bearing is something that we have to take great care to save ourselves from.

In connection with tale-bearing, a qissah comes to mind:

There was this one person who was quite wealthy. He had a number of servants and slaves. As he had the necessary wealth this is in order. The Sharí’at asks that of what use is that wealth, of what benefit is that opulence? If Alláh Ta’álá has blessed a person with wealth, and employing servants is not harmful, neither at that moment nor in the future, and there is no danger of suffering financial difficulties, neither at that moment nor in the future, and this person does not keep servants, then he is a stingy person and a miser of the highest degree! Such a person should have a servant and take work from a servant.

To continue: This well-to-do person was in need of a slave and he went out searching for one. It was an age where slaves were kept. Slaves were being sold in the marketplace.

In search of a slave, he wandered through the marketplace, inspecting the various slaves presented there. He then noticed an individual selling a particular slave. He noted that the slave was youthful and extremely handsome. His body was muscular, his limbs strong and firm. He was immediately drawn to him and his heart was set on buying him. He expressed this desire to the owner of the slave that he wished to buy this particular slave. The owner noticed, from the fine clothes, demeanour and speech of this person that he was from the nobility. He took him aside and quietly warned him: "For goodness sake, do not buy this slave! Think for yourself: if he had no serious fault in him – one that is harmful and damaging – why would I ever sell somebody who is young and strong and handsome like him? He has such a major defect that you will surely suffer from its effects. He is a tale-bearer, and that is why I am selling him." But the buyer was not prepared to listen to the owner.

It behoves a person that, if he is not prepared to use his own common sense and reason, he should take the advice of another and have confidence in him, provided that there is no evidence of this person's enmity.

With great reluctance the owner sold him this slave. The new owner took him home. The slave was very intelligent. He worked hard and long at gaining the confidence of his new owner and his wife. When he was certain that he had achieved this and that they trusted him fully and would not reject anything he said, his old habit of tale-bearing manifested itself. He told his owner: "I have been here now with you for a long time. You have observed that I have proved myself to be truthful. I can tell you something that is absolutely truthful: it is this that your wife has forged a liaison with a stranger, of which I am aware."

The husband thought to himself: "Such a long time has passed, and he has proved himself to be trustworthy, and this is what he is saying, but... should I take him seriously?" When the slave kept on repeating the same calumny, it had an effect on him, it being part of the nature of man that he is affected by the repetition of any statement. The slave then gave the owner a grave warning: "If you are not prepared to listen to me, just watch out for that day when your throat will be slit!"

The slave then went to his owner's wife and said: "Do you know that your

husband is having an affair with another woman? I have tried very hard to save him from this woman, but he is completely infatuated with her. Despite my efforts, he is just not prepared to listen to reason."

This is not a minor matter. How can any woman tolerate such a situation? When a man will not tolerate this shierk , that his wife's eyes should wander onto another – this being the demands of an honourable disposition – similarly, a wife will not tolerate that her husband has an affair with another woman. From this you can gauge that if, humans being humans, a husband and wife being of honourable dispositions, will not tolerate this shierk of sharing their partners with others, how can or will Alláh Ta'álá be happy or tolerate the shierk of anybody making partners with him? This is a matter to ponder over.

To continue: The same tale the slave kept on repeating to the wife, just as he had kept on repeating the other tale to the husband. Then, one day the wife asked him: "Well then, what is the form of deliverance from this situation? What can one do to disenchant his heart him from this other woman so that his affair terminates?" The slave replied: "I know of a special talisman – a charm or amulet. I shall make an effort, by myself or with the help of others whom I am acquainted with. But the situation is serious..."

Just see his guile! He had gone to the husband and said: "There will come a day when your throat will be slit, seeing that you are not prepared to listen!" He then went to the wife and said: "I know of the talisman to be used, but it is not going to be easy..."

In desperation, she pleaded: "As far as is possible, I shall do whatever I can. What is it that I have to do?" The slave said: "When your husband is sleeping and he is in deep sleep, you take a knife and go to him and cut some strands of hair from the under-section of his beard and bring them to me." Can you see his shrewdness? He continued. "When you have brought the strands of hair, I shall recite the special words of the charm on them and tie some knots, and this will result in discord and separation between him and this other woman."

He then went to the husband and said: "Be alert! I fear that the time has come that your throat is going to be slit!" That night he lay in his bed, but where would sleep come? When the thought has been instilled in the

mind that one's throat will be slit, can anybody still sleep peacefully? But he pretended to be fast asleep.

His wife approached. Through half-open eyes he saw that she had a knife in her hand. She tip-toed nearer and bent to cut the hair from the underside of his beard. He, on the other hand, having been told that his throat was to be slit that night, was now convinced that she was wielding a knife to slit his throat, and he grabbed her hand. Snatching the knife out of her hand, he slit her throat with that very knife!

It is obvious that an incident like this cannot be concealed. The police were informed and he was arrested for her murder. He was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. The whole story thus came out. Just before he was hanged, somebody asked him: "Why did you do it?" He replied: "This was the result of my own foolishness and immaturity. I did not accept the advice of one who had my welfare at heart. When I wished to buy this slave, the previous owner warned me that he was a tale-bearer and that one day I would surely suffer some harm from him. But I did not listen. I fell for his tale-bearing. My wife is also gone, my home is destroyed and my life is also ending."

My beloved friends! Whatever narration concerning oneself, whosoever narrates it, it is not permissible to accept it as truth. To be cautious thereafter, is another matter. There should be a full investigation first. There is a specific mas'alah regarding this: without proper investigation – without definite evidence – to act according to hearsay is not permissible.

To continue: Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم said that the person in the one grave was one who did not safeguard himself from drops of urine splashing on him and the person in the other grave was one who was a tale-bearer. "I have planted these green twigs on both their graves. The twigs will make tasbíh of Alláh as long as they remain. And the effect of the tasbíh will be that the punishment of the dweller will be lightened." The same with the other grave: "As long as the twig makes tasbíh, the punishment of the dweller in that grave will also be lightened." And it is not impossible that one day the punishment can end as well. Just assess for yourself the concern Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had.

Flowers on graves

From this I do not wish that it should be implied that it is proved that all flowers and plants on a grave will continuously be making the tasbíh of Alláh Ta'álá, whereas there is no proof for this. Also, the implication of having plants growing on the graves of people, and especially of the auliyá-Alláh, is that we consider them to be sinners and that they are undergoing punishment.

This is the mas'alah of the Sharí'at, and when the Sharí'at has stated something then it means that this is the order of Alláh Ta'álá and Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. That order (amr) that is not attained by qiyás, but is contrary to reason, which is referred to as amr-istihsání, shall be kept as it is and as it was according to the circumstances and the situation upon which it was stated. It will not be changed. This is the mas'alah.

Take this example: Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was leading the namáz. One sahábí رضى الله تعالى عنه, after making wudhú, tripped and fell as he was returning. The other sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم burst out laughing while they were in namáz. After completion of the namáz, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "Those of you who laughed out loud while in namáz, your wudhú is broken and your namáz is invalidated. Repeat your wudhú and your namáz."

This is contrary to "reason" and is an amr-istihsání. No impurity was excreted. There was merely the act of laughing. How can one's wudhú break? And, once the order was given that the wudhú was broken, it is obvious that the namáz cannot be valid in the absence of wudhú. This particular order where the wudhú is broken, is called amr-istihsání. That is why it is said that that namáz in which there is rukú' and sajdah, if one were to laugh out loudly, the wudhú would break; whereas that namáz which has neither rukú' nor sajdah, this wudhú will not break. It is a different matter that the namáz will become invalid. This is amr-istihsání. It cannot change and cannot be applied to other situations: If a person is merely sitting, not making namáz, and he laughs out loudly, his wudhú does not break.

We were discussing istinjá and Rasúlulláh's صلى الله عليه وسلم statements. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم also showed the method of performing istinjá, and said that thereafter one should then use a mud-clot (dhelá) to wipe oneself dry. We consider this to be a minor matter and have mostly discarded this

practice.

You are aware that non-Muslim groups are obsessed with research. Numerous Ph.Ds. are undertaken on various research projects. One such research project was undertaken by an English doctor: he wondered why the Nabí of the Muslims, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, gave the order to wipe with a mud-clot after making istinjá. We, as Muslims, are in no need of such research. All we need to know is that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم gave such an instruction at such a time. We have merely to obey. Why? We are in no need of any such philosophy and reasons. Our relationship is not such that we will obey only if we were to understand the reason behind the instruction. Wanting to know the reason behind an instruction and then only to obey is a sign of stupidity; it is a condition of having no faith and confidence – may Alláh Ta'álá save us from this! This attitude is one that can lead us to kufr. To undertake academic research is something else, but research is not needed for carrying out actions: our ímán dictates this is the order of Alláh Ta'álá and that of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Medical benefit of using mud-clods

To continue: We had heard related to us by Hadhratwálá, Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمة الله عليه. Hadhratwálá mentioned that he came across the article where this doctor wrote that for years he was doing research on why this instruction was given that one should wipe oneself with a mud-clot after having made istinjá. Then, one day, the following conclusions struck him: Urine is acidic. The residual drops of urine will, therefore, show an acidic effect on the urethra. The antidote to an acid is an alkali. Because of the harshness of acid, if drops of urine remain behind, this urine can have an adverse effect on the urethra. And the Nabí, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, where he had prescribed for his ummat deeds that are of benefit in the hereafter and also to save the ummat from harm in the hereafter, he had also prescribed deeds to save the ummat from worldly harms. This, then, is a bodily harm, where there is a danger of developing some illness. The urine has acidity in it and has the potential to cause harm, and the antidote is an alkaline so that the mud-clot draws out the drops of urine and its alkalinity neutralises the acidity, preventing the development of any illnesses. The

order that Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم gave to use the mud-clot, thus, provides this worldly benefit.

One can thus gauge from this that whatever is harmful, Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم has instructed us to abstain from it, and whatever is beneficial, we have been instructed to carry out. Everything has been narrated.

To continue with our topic: Among the instructions given to us is that, when we have promised somebody and given one's word to somebody, concerning time, be punctual in keeping to the time, unless some special, valid obstacle presents itself. This punctuality as far as time is concerned, is a mas'alah of our teachings, of our Sharí'at, of our Islám.

It is not necessary for us to take lessons from observing the punctuality of others in that other nationalities are very punctual. We have seen, during the time of British rule, that when a person had made an appointment with some Ra'ís for a specific time, and he would arrive just two minutes early for an appointment, this person would look at his watch and would not enter the premises to say that he had come. He would look at his watch and would wait two minutes outside. At exactly the appointed time would he announce his arrival. So exact was the punctuality. Our akábir, the ahlulláh, as well, were very meticulous about being punctual.

So, this is a promise – it is a commitment – and we have been ordered to fulfil our promises:

يٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا أَوْفُوْا بِالْعُقُوْدِ ؕ

O you Believers! Fulfil your promises. (S.5.1.)

وَأَوْفُوْا بِالْعَهْدِ ۚ إِنَّ الْعَهْدَ كَانَ مَسْئُوْلًا ۝

Surely you will be taken to account for promises made. (S.17.34.)

Promises of the heart we have to fulfil as well

We have this concept that promises are those that we make verbally and these are called promises and these are the only promises we have to fulfil. No, not at all! Even if we have made any promises in our hearts to anybody, to bring benefit or ease and comfort to anybody, these also have to be fulfilled! If we had made the promise in our hearts, but have not voiced it,

then this promise has also to be fulfilled. This promise made in the heart is making a promise to Alláh Ta'álá. It is necessary to fulfil this promise. If one does not fulfil this promise, there is a real danger of suffering some worldly harm!

It is accepted that as far as the ahlulláh are concerned, when some resolve sets into their hearts, provided that it is not contrary to the Sharí'at and there is some "alarm bell" (khatak) that rings in their heart, instilled from Alláh Ta'álá, it becomes a responsibility that they fulfil that resolve. If they do not fulfil that resolve – if they take no notice of that khatak – they do suffer some worldly harm, even though they may not suffer in the hereafter; for punishment in the hereafter is for sins only and not for matters that are not sins.

Do not ignore the 'khatak' in the heart: a qissah

Hadhratwálá, Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمة الله عليه, mentioned an incident:

A particular pír from elsewhere came to visit a particular locality. It is a natural desire to visit a person according to the status that he enjoys. When the local buzurg, who was a resident in that locality, heard of the arrival of this other person, he felt the desire to meet the visitor. When he stood up to proceed to meet him, the thought came into his heart: "Do not go." So he sat down again. Then he thought: "This is only a wehm – an unsubstantiated doubt – that I am having. I should go." He stood up to go. Again the thought came to him: "Do not go." He sat down again. After a little while he thought to himself for the third time, ANo, really, I should go and visit him. This is only my wehm. I have heard that he is a pious person." He stood up to go. Again the thought came to him: "Do not go!" Again he sat down. At the fourth instance he ignored the warning and proceeded towards the door. He had hardly taken two steps when his foot slipped and he twisted his ankle and fell down!

Importance of sincerity of intention

Another qissah: There is a qissah of an individual who was travelling in the countryside at a time when there was a severe drought and famine. He saw a large mound of sand in the distance and thought: "O Alláh! If

this mound of sand could turn into grain, I would distribute it among all the poor." This was a thought in his heart and became a promise of his. Alláh Ta'álá instructed the nabí of the time to inform this person that the sand will remain as it is, but the sincerity of his intention was noted by Alláh Ta'álá, and he would receive the reward in his Book of Good Deeds of having distributed that much grain to the poor!

Not honouring a promise

Another qissah: Another person made this resolve: "O Alláh! Were I to receive a bag of money I would give the money away in charity!" Alláh Ta'álá sent him a bag of money. The thought now came to him: "If I were to give this away in charity, what would I do if I am in need?" His intention changed and became corrupt. He did not distribute the money.

You must have heard that there may be delay (dher) with Alláh Ta'álá, but not darkness or injustice (indher). Shortly thereafter, this person developed toothache. He went for treatment but to no avail. The pain increased. His teeth started falling out one by one. The pain and agony increased. He finally went out to the wilderness and lay down in complete despair. A Voice told him: "You had made a promise of distributing some money. I sent you a bag of money, but you turned back on your promise. Unless and until you do not give the money away, all your teeth will fall out."

Just ponder: On the one hand there was this person without possessing any grain and the sand remaining as it was, but Alláh Ta'álá knew the sincerity of his intention, he was rewarded according to his intention. On the other hand, this person was given what he asked for, but his intention became corrupt and suffered its consequences, because he had not kept to the promise he had made.

Adl and fadhl: Justice and bounty of Alláh Ta'álá

As I was saying, by Alláh Ta'álá there is dher (delay) – this is due to some wisdom, some tact on His part – but there is no indher (darkness / injustice). Otherwise, taking those kings who do not rule with justice, if Alláh Ta'álá were to be unjust as well, what difference would there be between the worldly kings and the King of kings?

There are two attributes of Alláh Ta'álá to consider: One is adl and and the other is fadhl. Remember very well: never ask Alláh Ta'álá for adl, but always ask for fadhl. Should Alláh Ta'álá decide to deal with us with adl, dear friends, having placed one foot on the ground one will not remain alive long enough to place one's second foot on the ground! We should always but always ask from Alláh Ta'álá His fadhl, not for adl.

Just ponder: can any sinner ever address Alláh Ta'álá and say: "O Alláh! Deal with me with adl."? No, he cannot. However, what is the demand of adl? It is that, when one has acted contrary to His orders, one should not ask to be punished. Who wants to be punished? No. One should never request adl. Never mind sinning, even after having made 'ibádat one should not say: "O Alláh! I have made this 'ibádat – deal with me with adl." The quality of 'ibádat we perform our Rabb knows very well. If we were to be dealt with adl, we would not be entitled to any reward. Any reward is purely His fadhl. We should make du'á for fadhl. He has already stated from before that for every good deed (nékí), He will reward us tenfold. Therefore, the reward for performing the five daily namáz is as having performed fifty namáz. We are only too well aware of the quality of our namáz. Nevertheless, we place our hope in His fadhl, as has been mentioned.

These are topics that come to mind. As the topics come to mind, I mention them. I do not think out the topics beforehand. What is achieved by such planning? One plans one thing and something entirely different happens.

One buzurg was asked: "How did you come to recognise Alláh Ta'álá?" He replied: "I recognised Him by the fact that I resolve something and it does not materialise – I resolve something and it does not materialise – I resolve something and it does not materialise – I resolve something and it does not materialise. From this I came to realise that there is another Being whose resolve overpowers mine."

Similarly, another was asked: "How would you define 'aql? " He replied: "'Aql is that which recognises Alláh Ta'álá." He was then asked: "Who is Alláh Ta'álá?" He replied: "Alláh Ta'álá is He who cannot be encompassed by 'aql."

So, one should always ask for fadhl. How can one ask for adl? Even after 'ibádat, ask for fadhl. It is only through His fadhl that He accepts our

'ibádat. That is why our Dádá-pír, Hají Imdádulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه, used to say to those who remarked deprecatingly, with regard to the namáz that they had performed: "O Hadhrat, what is my namáz? My namáz is nothing." that this is showing contempt to namáz. This should NOT to be said. One should rather say, "Alhamdulilláh! I have performed namáz with the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá, and I have hope that, through His fadhl, it will be accepted."

These are words, though spoken by my tongue, but are the statements of my Sheikh رحمة الله عليه. What I have heard from him I am relaying to you.

Rahá'ish, árá'ish, zíbá'ish and numá'ish

You will have noted that people have glass cabinets – even people over here possess them. There is no harm in having them, if Alláh Ta'álá has blessed one with wealth. I do not wish to discuss this matter now, as I have already discussed it somewhere else.

There is no objection to having these cabinets, bearing in mind a few guidelines: Briefly, there are four categories: Rahá'ish, árá'ish, zíbá'ish and numá'ish. I hope our mothers and sisters are also listening attentively! I have been informed that there are womenfolk who are also listening.

Firstly, there is rahá'ish: this means, to have a place to stay, where one can see to one's needs, where there is shade from the sun, protection from the rain and cold. Such a place is called a house – a place to stay and where one's basics needs are seen to. To attain this much is fardh and wájib. Secondly, we have árá'ish: possessing those items whereby one can live in comfort. The house may be built but, as yet, there are no features providing comfort. If Alláh Ta'álá has blessed one with wealth, one should add on features providing comfort: some paintwork; windows providing proper ventilation; rooms big enough to be comfortable; proper lighting; etc. – features providing comfort. This category is mustahab, whereas the first category was wájib. The third category is that of zíbá'ish or zínat: beauty/ elegance/ adornment. This category is mubáh – that is, it is já'iz. It is neither wájib nor mustahab. If Alláh Ta'álá has blessed one with wealth, and one undertakes to make the inside on one's home beautiful and elegant, then it is permissible. A person may have elegant carpets on the floor,

beautiful frames on the walls, valuable objects in glass cabinets, etc. This will fall in the category of zíbá'ish and zínat.

Women and beautification

For womenfolk to beautify themselves for their husbands, whether it is facial beauty, or beauty of their hair or their clothes, so that their husbands are happy with them, that their hearts are more attracted to them and are more drawn to them, is not merely mubáh, it is higher category than even mustahab. Zínat and zíbá'ish of this type is not only mustahab but it is wájib for her, that her husband's heart remains attached to her and that his eyes do not drift to others and his feelings do not incline towards others. This is wájib for the wife: she should be neat and tidy, her hair properly combed, she should apply surmah, and wear attractive clothes.

However, we see our womenfolk adorning themselves and making themselves attractive when they go out to weddings, but the moment they come home they remove these clothes. These sisters who then claim that they are staying with zíbá'ish and zínat – forgive me, but what they have said, and are saying, is not zíbá'ish, but falls into a fourth category, and that is of numá'ish, which is harám.

This fourth category of numá'ish, to display to others, is harám. In addition, if the clothes worn are contrary to the Islámic teachings, and are an imitation of non-Muslims, what is termed as tashabbah of non-Muslims, following their fashions, then this act in itself will also be harám. What happens is that today she is wearing a particular outfit which she saw displayed in the shops on their mannequins. After a few days this outfit is taken off and another outfit is worn, another fashionable outfit from America or elsewhere which she saw displayed on another mannequin in the shops. The first outfit may have cost five hundred Rands and the second outfit also costs several hundred Rands. This involves another evil – destroying one's wealth. One may dress well but simple, but one should not imitate other nations. Imitation of other nations – tashabbah – is harám. Whether it is a male or a female who imitates other nations, in both cases it is harám. There is a very severe emphasis on its avoidance.

Beards of men and tresses of women

A Hadíth Sharíf comes to mind:

Among the varied jamá'at of malá'ikah who recite the tasbíh, there is a tasbíh of one group of malá'ikah which is truly amazing. The tasbíh that this jamá'at of malá'ikah recite is:

سُبْحَانَ مَنْ زَيَّنَ الرِّجَالَ بِاللُّحٰى وَزَيَّنَ النِّسَاءَ بِالذَّوَائِبِ

We recite the tasbíh of that pure Alláh Who adorned males by way of their beards and of that pure Alláh Who adorned women by way of their tresses.

What we are discussing is zínat: The tasbíh is of that zínat. It is not to be assumed that the beard is only for adornment. The zínat refers to the tasbíh. Having a beard infers that there is zínat in it. However, it is fardh to keep beard.

It is of the she'ár (symbols) of Islám. When it is said that: "It is merely a sunnat", this thought is plain deception. Performing a circumcision is also referred to as sunnat. It can also be said that the Azán is sunnat. When the thought is expressed that it is merely a sunnat, then these are not befitting words to be uttered by any Muslim. Can any person claiming to be an 'áshiq of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم say: "It is merely a sunnat."? What an unseemly sentence!

These are of the she'ár of Islám that men should keep beards and that women should have tresses – the longer the tresses, with beautification and grooming, to that extent it lends to the beauty and adornment of women. There was that age, when women used to have an altercation with one another and one would threaten the other: "Let my husband come home and see if I do not cause your tresses to be cut off!" This was said in extreme anger. When there was a fight between the menfolk, were one of the men to catch hold of the other's beard, this was the end! Everything else could be tolerated, but for somebody else to lay a hand on one's beard was intolerable. It was a grievous insult, damaging enough for the person to give an ultimatum: "Today it is either me or you!"

The beard is of the sh'ár of Islám – it is fardh to keep one. Not to keep a beard is a matter of sin. However, not to keep a beard and then to make

insulting comments about the beard and say: “What have you put up? A ‘sign-board’?” A statement also heard is that a beard is kept by goats. The person making this statement does not realise that this comment reaches back to include the Ambiyá علیهم السلام!

I tell my brothers that, when such comments are directed at them, they should not feel upset, because they are being praised by such comments. These critics have acknowledged your elevated status. Do you not know that not every shop has a “sign-board”, but only big and important firms will have “sign-boards”! In other words, what they are saying is that, because of your kámil ímán and because of you being a good Muslim, that beard of yours is evidence of you being a kámil, Díndár Muslim. That is what the “sign-board” signifies. They may mean something else by their comments, but they are, in actual fact, praising you.

Imitating others: a qissah concerning transposition of bodies

I am reminded of a qissah. This is a historical incident that Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمة الله علیه related to us:

It was the time of hajj. Normally, before or after hajj, people go to the qabrastán – Jannatul-Málá in Makkah and Jannatul-Baqí in Madínah – to recite fátihah.

As a group passed a certain grave, their gazes fell on the body inside and they saw, to their utter amazement, what appeared to be the body of a young Christian girl! As we are all aware, no non-Muslim is allowed entrance into the Haramain, sacred cities of Makkah Mu’azzamah and Madínah Munawwarah. How could a Christian girl be present here? What an amazing thing to happen! One of the onlookers said: “But a certain man – a proper practising Muslim performing his namáz at the proper times, with a proper beard and so forth – was buried in this grave! Where is his body? In his lifetime, was there any action of his that could be responsible for this strange occurrence? Let us enquire at his home.”

Some people went to the house where this man, whose body was supposed to be in the grave, used to reside to enquire from his wife. They asked her as to the kind of person her late husband was and what his character was like. She replied: “He was a very good man. He was regular and punctual in

his namáz and he kept a proper beard – he had all good qualities in him. Why are you asking?" They urged her: "Think carefully. Was there anything he may have done that was... er... not entirely Islámic?" The widow paused to think. After some thought, she spoke: "One thing comes to mind. It is this: When my husband was in need of ghusl after janábat, yes, he definitely did perform ghusl. However he used to comment: 'There is this good thing about the Christian religion that it is not necessary to perform the ghusl of janábat.'"

What this implies is that the teachings of another religion have been given pre-eminence and virtue in direct opposition to the Islámic fardhíyat (compulsory 'ibádat) of the ghusl of janábat. This amounts to a criticism and objection of the command of Alláh Ta'álá, that it would have better if this command was not there. As a habit he did perform the ghusl but, in his heart, he found the command distasteful and he wished that it would have been better if this command was not there.

Ponder! He was performing the ghusl but from his lips were issuing words belittling and condemning the Sharí'at, and he considered that he was a mu'min, but ímán had departed from him. Some words of kufr are uttered by people and, out of welfare and compassion for our brothers, it is necessary to point this out to them. They are unaware which words, if uttered, will lead to kufr. It is, therefore, necessary that these topics come to the ears of our brothers and sisters. Topics bringing tears to the eyes have been, and continue to be, discussed. Topics producing mirth and humour have also been, and continue to be, discussed. Historical topics are also discussed. But these are not as beneficial as discussing the topics of illnesses and the cures of these illnesses. Unfortunately, our inclinations and attentions are not on the latter.

To continue: One of those who were present at the grave had an amazing tale to tell. He said: "I recognise this girl in this grave, who appears to be a Christian. I am her ustád. I used to teach her in Paris. She accepted Islám in front of me – she read the shahádah at my hands. She passed away in Paris and was buried there. It was thereafter, with the season of hajj coming, that I came for hajj. This is that very girl!"

Just see: This girl, living in Paris as a Christian her whole life, then

accepted Islám, passed away there and was buried there, and now came to lie in a grave in Makkah Mu'azzamah; while this man, a resident of Makkah Mu'azzamah, regular with his namáz and rozah, a good Muslim in appearance, buried in the sacred precincts of Makkah Mu'azzamah, was not to be found where he was buried.

A collection was made and funds were made available to send the ustád to Paris where he spoke to the parents of the girl and sought permission to have the body buried in Paris to be exhumed. When the coffin was opened, the body of that Muslim person who was buried in Makkah Mu'azzamah was found to be lying in the coffin! Alláh Ta'álá had caused the body of the girl to be transposed from there, as if to say that this Dárul-Kufr was not a worthy place for her to lie and that the Dárul-Islám of Makkah Mu'azzamah was a more appropriate place for her. As for the body that was in the sacred precincts of Dárul-Islám, it was as if Alláh Ta'álá had said that this is not a place for kufr, and his body was transposed to a land of kufr.

One should ponder. One should be careful what words issue from our lips. When the month of Ramadhán approaches wherein we fast, there are many who do not fast. Well, they are responsible for their actions but, when asked if they are fasting, for them to say: "Why should one fast? Fasting is for those who do not have food at home," they do not realise that these are words of kufr.

As I was saying – and, hopefully, you would have listened attentively – a few aspects have been mentioned concerning rahá'ish, ásá'ish, zíbá'ish and numá'ish. We have been forbidden to imitate non-Muslims in those aspects specific to them, whether the tashabbah relates to opinions and statements, or the tashabbah relates to actions and deeds, or whether the tashabbah relates to clothing and dressing, or even to the extent of tashabbah related to methodologies which are specific to non-Muslims. That is why the fuqahá have written in connection with utensils made of brass – I have not seen them being used here, but they are used back home to make rotí, etc. – that it is not permissible for Muslims to use them; but should they wish to make use of brass utensils then they should be plated with copper to differentiate them from the brass utensils used by non-Muslims.

One can see that in connection with a utensil, which is an item apart from one's body, the Sharí'at states that it needs to be differentiated from that of non-Muslims, then with regard to the clothes that are worn on one's body and are attached to the body, how much more the emphasis will there not be on avoiding tashabbah with non-Muslims. Going a step further, take one's face, which forms part of one's body, how much greater caution should one not exercise in avoiding tashabbah with the non-Muslims.

Not observing purdah is imitating others

The absence of purdah is a feature of non-Muslim lifestyles. The Islámic teaching is that of adopting purdah– not of neglecting purdah (be-purdagí). By seeing others, by staying among them and by associating with them, the effects have manifested themselves and we have stopped observing purdah. We have adopted the ways of non-Muslims, this being tashabbah of them. Worse still, we do not consider this to be a defect within us. It is a general rule that when a wrong action is commonly practised and one's temperament repeats that action frequently, one ceases to recognise it being wrong.

Bribery is wrong and was considered to be such by everybody, but by employees indulging in bribery as a common practice, it being evil has gone out of the minds of people and, instead, they are proud of it and will enquire from one another: "How much do you earn?" The reply will be: "I nett X amount a month."

Friends! When an evil becomes common and widespread, no matter how recriminative it may be, the evil of it goes out of people's minds. It is then considered to be goodness. Neglecting purdah was the supreme degree of insult and humiliation. Be-purdagí is a feature of the non-Muslims. By associating with them, staying among them, imitating them, the evil of be-purdagí has disappeared from our minds and we see the results of this on front of us. To put a halt to this evil has now become very difficult.

The fact is that there is the statement of Alláh Ta'álá in the Qur'án Sharíf:

يٰٓأَيُّهَاالنَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِّأَزْوَاجِكَ وَبَنٰتِكَ وَنِسَآءِ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يُدْنِيْنَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ جَلَابِيْبِهِنَّ ؕ

O Nabí (i.e. Rasúlulláh صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم) say to your wives, your daughters and the womenfolk of the Believers, if they perchance were to leave their homes, they should cover themselves with their sheets (from their heads till the bottom). (S.33.59.)

Jaláb – this is a sheet that is thrown over the head and allowed to hang right down to the feet. This includes covering the head, face, chest, legs and feet.

An incident from days gone by indicating the high degree of hayá

Let me mention an incident that occurred in the days gone by in Jalálábád, indicating the high degree of modesty and sense of shame in that era. In those days women used to travel in dolís. These were sedan chairs which had a canopy and were covered on all four sides. There was a very small window-type opening on the sides. Even if they had to travel short distances, they made use of the dolí. After the partition of the subcontinent (into India and Pakistan) the use of the dolí has ceased.

A wedding was taking place locally. A certain lady was travelling to the house where the bride resided. While travelling, she placed her face at the window – which she should not have done – and peeped outside. Nearby, there was a Khánsáhib who observed her action. He quickly went into his house, took out his rifle, loaded it, came out and shot the lady as she was still peeping from the little window. She died on the spot.

The carriers, unaware of what had happened, stopped at the house where the woman was proceeding to, and placed the chair on the ground. But who could come out? The woman was dead. A girl from the house came to receive her, but nobody climbed out. The carriers called out for the woman to alight, but there was no response. Finally, they lifted up the curtains, only to see her lying dead, shot through the head. There was a big commotion. Who shot her? The carriers recalled hearing a shot being fired but could not say from where it originated. When an investigation commenced, the Khánsáhib himself came forward and declared: "I shot her. If she had no intention of observing purdah, why did she sit in a dolí? If she decided to sit in a dolí, then why did see expose herself by peeping out? My ghairat (sense of honour) could not tolerate this situation. My ghairat impelled me

to take the measure I did. Today she exposes herself after choosing to sit in purdah in a dolí and tomorrow she will be walking in the street without purdah!" This incident took place a very long time ago.

I have to emphasise that the above incident is not part of Dín.

What we were discussing is that which is resolved in the heart, is a promise made to Alláh Ta'álá. If one acts contrary to this, it is dishonouring a promise. There will be accountability by Alláh Ta'álá. The discussion then went on to the topic of tashabbah.

Nisbat with Alláh Ta'álá and with Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم

One other matter comes to mind. Oh, if we could only take a lesson from it! These Ahkáme-Iláhí (Orders of Alláh Ta'álá) denote nisbat with Alláh Ta'álá. They denote nisbat with Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم. The whole issue of nisbat is very wonderful and amazing. The nisbat of Madínah Tayyibah is with Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم. The nisbat of Baitulláh Sharíf is with Alláh Ta'álá. Just see how much honour and respect is there for the city of Madínah Tayyibah. Just see how much honour and respect there is for the city of Makkah Mu'azzamah and of the Baitulláh Sharíf. Therefore, how much more respect and honour should one not hold in one's heart to the orders related to these? How much displeasure will there not be on acting contrary to these orders!

One person, having travelled through various countries, arrived at the time of hajj and went to Madínah Tayyibah. He bought some dahí (yoghurt), and, having eaten some, remarked: "I have been to such and such a place. The dahí of that place is better than the dahí of this place." When he went to sleep at night, Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم said to him: "Seeing that you prefer the dahí of that other place you may as well leave here and go there!" When Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم cannot tolerate even an adverse comment made about an item of food in his locality, how would he tolerate the actions of those who act contrary to his given orders?

There is a clear cut injunction:

خَالِفُوا الْمُشْرِكِيْنَ وَاعْفُوا اللُّحٰى وَقَصُّوا الشَّوَارِبَ

Act contrary to (the actions) of the mushrikín – lengthen your beards and

shorten your moustaches.

As to the length of the beard, it is not unlimited. We should not be in imitation of the Yahúd or the Sikhs. This would again amount to tashabbah. The emphasis is on opposing the mushrikín.

To continue: The talk was on Alláh Ta'álá's fadhl and adl. These are two important attributes. We should never ask for adl but always ask for fadhl. If we were to be dealt with adl, our life would not be sustainable for even one moment: having taken one step, we would not live long enough to take another step forward.

Qissah of Hadhrat Shiblí رحمة الله عليه going to the masjid

On the topic of fadhl I remembered a qissah concerning Hadhrat Shiblí رحمة الله عليه that he had made wudhú and was proceeding to the masjid to perform namáz رحمة الله عليه.

This should be our effort also, that we should make wudhú at home and perform all our five namáz in the House of Alláh Ta'álá. It is conceded that in this age many homes may not have water, so there is no problem in making wudhú at the masjid.

So, having made wudhú at home, Shiblí رحمة الله عليه was proceeding to the masjid when a Voice called out: "Shiblí! You are proceeding with those feet to Our House?" Shiblí رحمة الله عليه turned back. The Voice called out again: "Shiblí! Why have you turned your back on Our House? Why have you turned your face away?" Shiblí رحمة الله عليه stood still. The Voice called out again: "Shiblí! How can you make sabr from coming to Us that you have stood still?" Shiblí رحمة الله عليه cried out: "I am not allowed to proceed; I am not allowed to return; I am not allowed to stand." The Voice called out again: "Very well, Shiblí, you may come with those feet of yours towards Us." What a manifestation of muhabbat!

It is His fadhl that He has allowed us to perform namáz. Hají Imdádulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه said many times that to state deprecatingly: "What is our namáz? It is nothing!" is an insulting statement. Do not say this. However, every each and namáz should be performed with diligence and care. Say to yourself: "I have presented myself in the court of Alláh Ta'álá. How should I stand? How should I make my intention and fold my hands? How should

I pronounce the words with clarity? Where should I place my gaze?" Yet, we acknowledge that who can perform his 'ibádat at the level which the honour and dignity of Alláh Ta'álá demands? But, simultaneously, depart from the masjid with this yaqín that the namáz has been accepted.

A lesson to be learnt from imitation fruit

The example we can provide is as follows: We were saying that people have glass cabinets in their houses and then we went on the topic of zínat, that it was permissible. Coming back: In these glass cabinets are to be found various ornaments. However, there should be no figurines and pictures of animate objects. One may also find, among the ornaments, a bowl or basket of artificial fruit – there may be melons, bananas, grapes, pears and apples, and so forth.

The first time that a simple person like myself came across this situation, the thought came to mind that the host has already kept some fruit ready for us; some bananas, grapes and some apples. Have these being kept to eat? But, after enquiring, I was informed: "These bananas, grapes and apples in front of you are not for eating." "Then what are they for?" "Hadhrat, this is some artwork. A certain person has fashioned these into the form of fruit from clay, painted them in the colours of real fruit and baked them in an oven to give this presentation." I was amazed. It was so cleverly done as to appear like real fruit – real bananas, grapes, apples and melons, yet made of clay!

Also amazing is the fact that the original, real fruit would cost just a few cents or Rands, yet, these artificial fruits, because of the clever craftsmanship, cost ten times or more than the real fruit! Instead of you giving fifty cents you gave five Rands for each fruit. What type of person are you? You pay fifty cents for the original and five Rands for the artificial fruit that cannot be eaten but is a mere copy of the real fruit? If you are so happy that you are prepared to reward the craftsman ten times the cost of the original, and you are proudly displaying the fruit in your glass cabinet, then why would Alláh Ta'álá not accept that rozah and namáz, even though they may not be like the original rozah and namáz made by Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, but are attempts at replicating the same? Definitely He will!

One should leave the masjid with this yaqín that definitely He will. Our Dádá-pír, Hají Imdádulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه also said: "Having completed one namáz and one now performs the next namáz, have the yaqín that the previous namáz was accepted. If a king calls one of his citizens to his royal court and he is displeased with him will he invite him again? Definitely not! In a similar manner, if Alláh Ta'álá has blessed one with taufíq of making 'ibádat in His Royal court, and then blesses you with the taufíq to perform 'ibádat in His Royal court once again, it implies that the first 'ibádat was accepted."

The mas'alah of tashabbah has again been proved in a wonderful and amazing manner from the above explanation. Friends, there is great qabúliyet in imitating the pious. Similarly, there is great repugnance in imitating the evil. Another word had come to my lips, but I did not use it.

We hear people commenting sarcastically: "Does Dín rest on the way you dress?" Yes. Dín does rest on the way you dress! Wear Islámic clothes and then see! When somebody wears a kurtah extending to below the knees, people lift their eyebrows. One person over here told me – I had been told this before and I have heard it again today – that when a person wearing white Islámic clothes and a topí, and has a beard, the indigenous people will greet them with respect and will say that this is a Musalmán. And when a person is not dressed in this manner but has a coat and trousers, despite being a Muslim, the response is not the same. And when he is asked: "Who is this person and who is that person?" the reply given is that this person is an Indian, while the other person is a Muslim. Even the indigenous people differentiate on the basis of clothes and appearance. This is the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá.

Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام and the magicians

What can one do? Issues keep on returning. Leave aside what happens in dreams, but have you not heard? Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام was sent by Alláh Ta'álá to Fir'oun who had become very arrogant. Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام was ordered to invite him to Tauhíd.

However, dear friends, those who refuse to accept, will refuse to accept

the Word of Alláh Ta'álá; and those who refuse to accept the Word of Alláh Ta'álá, and those who do not accept the Word of Alláh Ta'álá, where will they accept the word of the Rasúl also? Shaitán did not accept the Word of Alláh Ta'álá; Abú Jahl did not accept the word of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. Nimrod did not accept the word of Hadhrat Ibráhím عليهم السلام. And Fir'oun refused to accept the word of Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام.

Fir'oun had never suffered even a headache. He felt himself to be invincible and claimed godhead for himself. He was given respite for three hundred and fifty years, during which time he was not afflicted with even a headache. Fir'oun thought that he was god. How much time was he not given?

As mentioned before, there is dher by Alláh Ta'álá – a period of respite – but there is no indher (injustice). One should not abuse the respite given by Alláh Ta'álá, as mentioned earlier in the qissah of the person who did not keep to his promise of giving charity after Alláh Ta'álá gave him money.

Fir'oun still refused to accept after the three hundred and fifty years were up. Instead, he summoned all the magicians in the land. It should be noted that in that age there were no magicians superior to the ones that Fir'oun had. When the magicians gathered, their leader told his disciples: "Go and find out the type of clothes Músá was wearing. Make for yourselves exactly the same type of clothes. If he is a magician then there is no fear that he will win, because there are no magicians greater than us. And if he is a nabí, as he claims to be, and he exhibits any miracle of his, the people will not realise that it is Músá, as you will all be dressed the same, and the people will not be influenced by him." The magicians did as they were told and dressed just like Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام was dressed.

At the time that the challenge took place, Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام was asked by the magicians: "Will you commence or us?" He replied: "You begin." From here, it has been deduced that, as far as possible, avoid being a claimant, as one's case is stronger then. The magicians displayed their trickery. In response, Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام threw down his miraculous staff. As he knew what the potential in the staff was, he stood back. The staff miraculously turned into a huge snake which then proceeded to swallow the smaller snakes which the magicians had produced. The smaller snakes were ingested and digested by the staff-turned-serpent. What a big stomach the

serpent had! Seeing it was a miraculous serpent, this is to be expected.

Here, let me relate to you a subtle point (latífah): After the staff-turned-serpent of Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام had swallowed the artificially created snakes of the magicians, the staff-turned-serpent turned around and proceeded in the direction of Fir'oun. Fir'oun's self-proclaimed godhead vanished in an instant. As the serpent came nearer, he backed off in terror and pleaded with Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام: "Catch him! Grant me respite!" Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام had a fierce temperament and he refused to catch hold of the serpent. Wahí came to Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام from Alláh Ta'álá: "O Músá! We had granted Fir'oun respite for three hundred and fifty years, and he is asking you respite for just a little while, and you are not prepared to grant him this? Grant him respite." Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام granted him respite. He grabbed hold of the serpent and it turned into a staff again. However, it appears in the books of history that, previous to this incident, it was Fir'oun's habit to have a bowel action once every forty days but, subsequent to this episode when he saw the serpent coming for him, he had forty bowel actions in one day! This was his "godhead"! Friends, there is respite from Alláh Ta'álá. There is imhál (to be given respite) but not ihmál (to be let off).

The magicians brought ímán. This was the point I wished to make. The magicians accepted the invitation to Tauhíd. Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام was puzzled by one aspect. He asked Alláh Ta'álá: "O Alláh! You sent me to Fir'oun for his guidance. He did not accept the invitation to Tauhíd, but the magicians brought ímán. Why so? This is something I do not understand." Friends, these are matters of the unseen. These are issues concerning the secrets of Alláh Ta'álá! No nabí can fathom the secrets of Alláh Ta'álá and no angel can fathom the secrets of Alláh Ta'álá.

The mysteries and secrets of Alláh Ta'álá

Another qissah has come to mind: Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام once requested: "O Alláh! I wish to attain knowledge of Your secrets." Alláh Ta'álá replied: "O Músá, do not ask about My mysteries. You can never fathom them." However, Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام persisted with his request.

Take note at this point that, in our worldly affairs, when somebody

important is pleaded to, and this person begs and persists in a request, the person to whom the requested is directed will give in to please the person. With Alláh Ta'álá it is the same. The rule is that the auliyá-Alláh are trained in the manner of the Ambiyá عليهم السلام. This is the rule.

اَلْوِلَايَةُ مُسْتَفَادٌ مِنَ النُّبُوَّةِ

Wiláyet that is attained – the wiláyet that is of benefit – has been attained in the footsteps of the Ambiyá عليهم السلام

Some follow in the footsteps of Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام. Others follow in the footsteps of Hadhrat Ibráhím عليهم السلام, and so forth.

When Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام persisted with his request, Alláh Ta'álá acceded and instructed him: "Go and station yourself at the mouth of a cave at a particular place. You will be able to see wayfarers travelling along the path there but they will not be able to see you. From there you will be able to observe My mysteries in action." Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام went and stationed himself at the spot indicated by Alláh Ta'álá.

After a very short while a person on a horse appeared. The path was adjacent to a stream where wayfarers used to stop to refresh themselves. The weather was hot. The wayfarer alighted from his horse and, placing a satchel that he with him on the ground, refreshed himself with water from the stream, ate from his provisions, climbed back on his horse and departed. He forgot to pick up his satchel and take it with him! Take careful note of this point.

Very shortly, another wayfarer passed by there. He saw the satchel, picked it up and walked away with it. Again, very shortly after this, a third wayfarer came that way, a poor wood cutter carrying a bundle of wood on his head. He stopped there, lay down his bundle, sat next to the stream and washed his hands and face.

In the meantime, the first wayfarer on the horse thought of his satchel, remembered that he had left it at that particular spot by the stream and returned to retrieve it. All the while Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام was observing closely to what was happening. The wayfarer on the horse returned and saw this person washing himself and then anxiously looked around for his

satchel, but obviously, the satchel was nowhere to be found. He demanded from the woodcutter: “I forgot my satchel here just a short while ago. There is nobody else here besides you. Give me back my satchel!” This poor woodcutter denied all knowledge of the satchel, but the first wayfarer would not believe him and kept on insisting that he wanted his satchel back: “There is nobody else here besides you. You must have taken it!” The woodcutter kept on denying any knowledge of it. It was an age where people carried their weapons with them. The first wayfarer took out his sword and killed the woodcutter, turned his back on him, climbed on his horse and rode away.

Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام was struck with astonishment. Someone else took the satchel and this person who did not take the satchel, but busy washing his hands and face, was beheaded. What an amazing turn of events!

Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام asked Alláh Ta’álá: “O Alláh! I do not understand at all!” Alláh Ta’álá said: “I told you beforehand that you cannot fathom My mysteries. Have you observed My mysteries?” Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام said: “Alláh, please explain to me.” Alláh Ta’álá explained: “The father of the rider on the horse – the one whose satchel was taken – had at one stage stolen a thousand Dínárs from the wealth of the second wayfarer. Therefore, the second wayfarer, who took the satchel, was compensated in that the satchel containing a thousand Dínárs was returned to him from the inheritance of the first wayfarer.”

As to the one who was beheaded, there also lies an amazing tale: “The wood cutter, who was beheaded, had murdered the father of the first wayfarer. The son of the murdered man was given the opportunity to avenge the murder of his father.” Obviously, all three involved were not aware of the reasons for the events, but justice was finally meted out. “Músá, each had his right restored to him. Your mind cannot reach to such depths.” Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام said: “Yá Alláh-Mian! Nobody can unravel Your mysteries!” A Fársí phrase states:

The rights have been restored to those who have rights.

Have you seen? The unseen is known only by Alláh Ta’álá. This is of His special attributes.

Is there anything more to say? Yes, something does come to mind. I

hope that our sisters and mothers are listening carefully! When something happens that is contrary to one's temperament – something causing sadness, grief, despondency or some harm or somebody's demise – one tends to lose control of oneself. Then there is crying and wailing, clothes are shred, there is cessation of eating and drinking; and the thought is there that one does not know what treasures have slipped from our hands. One's gaze shifts away from Alláh Ta'álá. Some become completely depressed and do not leave their beds. Stop to think and ponder on the following qissah, also connected to Divine mysteries:

The mysteries behind the death of a káfir and a mu'min

Two persons became very ill, one was a Yahúd, a káfir, and the other was a Muslim, a mu'min. The Yahúdí káfir had a desire: "I am close to death. I wish I could eat some fish!" The Muslim mu'min also had a wish: "I am dying. If I could just have some olive oil!"

The one was anxious to have his wish of eating fish fulfilled and the other was anxious to have his wish of having some olive oil fulfilled. Alláh Ta'álá summoned two malá'ikah. To the one Alláh Ta'álá gave the instruction: "There are no fish in his pond. Place a fish in the pond for the Yahúd to eat." To the other malá'ikah Alláh Ta'álá gave the instruction: "The Muslim mu'min wishes to have some olive oil. There is bottle of olive oil on a shelf in his house. Take the bottle and destroy it with the olive oil so that he cannot have it!"

Until the full account is not heard, one does not what kind of thoughts and doubts go through our minds. This is why one should listen to a bayán till the end. A bayán is such that midway through one topic another and then another topic is discussed, with the speaker coming back to complete the incomplete topics which were only partially discussed.

To continue: Both the malá'ikah met on the way to fulfil their tasks. The one asked the other: "Where are you going?" The first one said: "I have been ordered to go to a particular Yahúd. He has a desire to eat some fish, and there are no fish in his pond. So, I have to place one in it for him to eat. Where are you off to?" "I have been ordered to go to the house of a Muslim. He has a desire to partake of some olive oil. There is a bottle of

olive oil on a shelf in his house. My instructions are to destroy the bottle and the olive oil so that he cannot have it." The second malá'ikah enquired from the first: "Did you ask Alláh Ta'álá why?" The first one said: "Yes, I did. I said: 'O Alláh! The Yahúdí káfir is dying and You are fulfilling his dying wish and heart's desire. There is no fish, yet You are seeing to his wish. What is the wisdom behind this?" "What was the reply?"

Our sisters and mothers should listen very carefully to this!

"Alláh Ta'álá said: 'Whenever the Yahúd had performed any goodness in the world, I had compensated him in the world with some khair.'"

Note that good deeds performed in this world fall into two categories: One is where the intention is to attain some qurb – that is, attain some thawáb, attain some reward, attain closeness to Alláh Ta'álá, attain His pleasure, attain higher stages in Jannat. The other category is where the intention is solely to benefit the creation. One finds others give water to drink to the thirsty in hot weather, feed animals, give charity and assist people with problems out of a sense of compassion, and so forth.

"Alláh Ta'álá continued: 'He is now on the point of dying. He has to his credit one good deed, for which he has still not been compensated. He has this strong desire to eat fish. I want his desire to be fulfilled so that he is compensated in this world for the good he has done. And, in the hereafter, he proceeds straight into Jahannam. That is why I have instructed you to feed him the fish.'"

Are you pondering over this?

The first malá'ikah then asked the second one: "Did you enquire as to why you had to destroy the olive oil for the Muslim not to be able to partake of it?" "Yes, I did." "What did Alláh Ta'álá say?" "Alláh Ta'álá said: 'Whenever this mu'min Muslim bandah committed any sin, I afflicted him with some problem contrary to his temperament, some difficulty, some sadness and grief, some problem. He made sabr, on account of which I washed away his sins.'"

Ponder over this. Alláh Ta'álá is Arhamur-Ráhimín – the most merciful of all those who show mercy. Something comes to mind. Let me narrate it before I forget.

Marrying a second wife

A woman came to Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه. She asked him: "Hadhrat, my husband wants to marry a second wife – what do you have to say on this matter?" Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه replied: "Dear sister, Alláh Ta'álá states in the Qur'án Sharíf,

فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوْا فَوَاحِدَةً

And if you fear that you cannot do justice (to so many), then one only.
(S.4.3.)

If a man wishes to marry a second time, having one wife already, and he can be fair and do justice, then there is permission to do so, and if he is unable to be fair and do justice then it is not permissible to marry a second wife. If he wants to marry a second wife, what is the problem? It is permissible."

The woman responded: "Hadhrat, if the Sharí'at were to have allowed me, I would have taken off my veil from my face and revealed my face to you, and then asked you: 'Being married to one as beautiful as I – would it be even remotely justified for him to let his gaze fall on anyone else?'"

These words were hardly out of her mouth when Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه fell unconscious in a spell of ecstasy. The woman went away. When Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه regained his senses, his khádim-e-khás asked: "Hadhrat, what was the reason for you to have been overcome with such ecstasy?" Hadhrat Junaid Baghdádí رحمة الله عليه replied: "The woman's words reminded me of the Hadíth Sharíf wherein Alláh Ta'álá states that: 'O My bondsmen, the veils of núr that lie between Me and you, if it was possible for you to see Me, I would have lifted these veils of núr between Me and you, and I would have revealed Myself to you, and I would have asked you that: 'I being the (majestic) Deity that I am, would you be justified in letting your gaze fall elsewhere?'"

Ponder over this.

From here one should understand the position that one wife has. In this age men are finding it difficult to fulfil the rights of one wife, how can anybody picture having a second marriage and additional children? You

are not so young and strong, and neither is there the physical strength to fulfil the rights of two wives, when the rights of one are being fulfilled with difficulty, nor is there the wealth to treat both wives equally, nor is there the wealth to provide both equally. As for houses, give to the other wife a house to the same value as the first one was given. The value of food and clothing given to the one has to be the same as the value of the food and clothes given to the other. The amount of hours and minutes spent at night with the one has to be equal to the hours and minutes spent with the other. If the time spent with one exceeds the time spent with the other the rights of the latter have been usurped – one has committed zulm.

There is something else to remember as well: The one wife to whom you are already married – whether you married her having seen her before or without seeing her – may speak some harsh words at times, may be obstinate at times and may address you in an unsuitable terms at times, but the second wife will definitely be worse than the first one! Do not have any hope that the second wife will be angelic! Why so? The reason is that women, as many as there may be existing, even though they may be the wives of kings, even though they may be the wives of the auliyá-Alláh, they have been created from a crooked rib! You young people should remember this very well. Do not ever mention a second marriage. Also, do not ever take the name of taláq. She may ask for a taláq a thousand times – and she will definitely make this request – but do not do so.

Women created from the left rib of the left side.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had already stated long ago:

تَكْفُرْنَ الْعَشِيْرَ مَا رَاَيْتُ مِنْ نَاقِصَاتِ عَقَلٍ وَدِيْنٍ اَذْهَبُ بِلُبِّ الرِّجَالِ

You (women) show immense ingratitude to your husbands. You are deficient in intelligence and are so crafty that you chew up the intelligence of even the most clever and intelligent men!

Do you understand? Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had already mentioned this beforehand – he had foretold this. Have a proper understanding of this before getting married. And once you are married, stick to one! Live like a man.

Women have been told: “You show ingratitude.” Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has also said that you may give your wife gold filling the world but the day that you do something that upsets her, she will turn around and say: “Since the day I have come to this house, I have had no comfort! My mother and father gave me away without looking properly. My kismet is broken! Since I have come to this moribund house I have never been at ease! Give me taláq!”

Let her carry on using the word taláq. After all, she is a woman – she will speak irrationally. You, O male, have been created simply from sand: Hadhrat Ádam عليهم السلام was created from clay, whereas Hadhrat Hawwá عليهم السلام was created from the crooked rib of Hadhrat Ádam عليهم السلام, and from the left side, at that! Mind you, not from the right side, but from the left side. So, there are two kinks in her creation.

Now, it is possible to straighten everything – I have been to a steel plant and saw steel being melted and molded into ingots, so steel can be shaped and straightened – but, dear brother, if you think that you can straighten your wife, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has said it will not happen, but will break – that is, it will end in taláq. Do not ever try to attempt to straighten her. Yes, if you see something her temperament will accept, explain to her. In essence, do not pay heed to her words. Make as if you are deaf. And when you are deaf then you are dumb as well – if you do not hear, how can you answer back?

A unique way of creating peace

Hadhratwálá, Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمة الله عليه told us a qissah:

A certain person’s wife went to a buzurg with a complaint: “Hadhrat! My husband is causing me tremendous vexation with his scolding.” The buzurg immediately understood the situation. The husband says one thing and the wife says four things in retaliation. Her tongue never tires.

Just now we were sitting silently for quite some time and nobody spoke. You may have observed that in the home situation when the wife does not say anything, the husband will have nothing to say. Only if she says something will he respond to her. When several men get together they are able to remain silent for long periods, but let just two women come

together, then there is no room for silence! Therefore, become deaf and dumb and the argument will not progress any further.

To continue: When the wife came with her complaint, the buzurg immediately understood the situation. He said: "Bring some water and I will recite something over it." She brought the water. He mumbled something and then said: "Take this water with you. When your husband starts saying things to you, take a gulp of the water from this bottle and sit down. Do not swallow it and do not spit it out. The arguments will cease." She took the water and left.

Now, whenever the husband became a bit harsh in his speech, she would take a gulp of the water and sit down, neither swallowing the water nor spitting it out. The husband now had nothing to respond to. After a few days both the husband and the wife had stopped the arguments.

The position of the husband is the head of the family

What is the position of your husband? He is a male after all. He is the head. He may not be making namáz and he may be immoral, but for you, the wife, he is your leader. It is incumbent on you to be considerate and have adab for him. It is a different matter if you do not show any respect to him, he ignores your disrespect and discourtesy. However, after marriage, the wife is not bound to serve the father or obey the commands of her father as much as she is bound to obey the orders of her husband.

Obedience to the husband: qissah of the wife of a sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه

Our sisters and mothers should listen attentively to the following incident which occurred in the time of Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم:

The husband of a particular lady, when he was about to leave home, instructed his wife: "Do not set your foot outside the house until my return."

There was purdah in that age, not as we see nowadays that husband himself walks hand in hand with his wife in public, making an exhibition of himself. Our experienced elders used to say: "Once you have allowed the feet of your wife to leave the threshold of your home, and you then wish her to stay confined to the house, you will not find her at home any

longer." This is an observation that comes from experience, dear brothers. We have allowed her out, so the blame lies with us.

So, this sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه went away, leaving these instructions with his wife. The lady's father fell ill. He sent a message to her with somebody that he wished to see her. She replied: "Ask Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم the mas'alah, that my husband had left these instructions, so should I go or not?" Rasúlulláh's صلی الله علیه وسلم reply was that it was not já'iz for her to go. She did not go.

Do you see her qualities? On the second day the message came: "Your father is now close to death. Now go and visit him." She gave the same reply as before, and Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم gave the same reply: "It was not permissible for her to leave the house as her husband had forbidden her. She was not set her foot outside." On the third day her father passed away. Somebody came to inform her: "Now that he has passed away, go and see him." She still gave the same reply. Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم said: "Even now it is not já'iz for her to leave the house. Her husband had forbidden her."

It is a different matter that the husband should allow his wife to visit her parents once a year, whether they call her at their expense or not at their expense. If Alláh Ta'álá has given him the means, then he should do so at his own expense. Allow her to stay some days with them. The parents also should not refuse the husband's request to have her back. They may request: "Our hearts desire she should stay longer." However, if he insists that she should go back, then they should concede: "She is yours. Take her away." There should neither be refusal from the one side nor insistence from the other side. Yes, once a year let her meet her parents.

On the reply of Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم, she stayed at home and did not go. Her father was given ghusl and the kafan was wrapped around him, the Janázah namáz was performed and he was buried.

When Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم returned home after the burial, wahí came down, and Hadhrat Jibríl علیهم السلام came and delivered a message. After he had left, Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم summoned a sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه and told him: "Go and inform the lady who had been asking the mas'alah concerning leaving the house where her husband had forbidden her to leave the house, even though her father became ill and passed away, and I had told her that

it was not permissible to go out from the house – go and tell her that wahí has come from Alláh Ta'álá, stating: 'Convey salám to her and tell her that because she had acted on the Sharí'at, that she acted on the instructions of her husband and did not go to see her father, on this basis I have forgiven her father.'"

Say, for instance, she had gone to see her father, what would have happened? She would have shed a few more tears, but she would never have been blessed with the blessing she attained by acting on the Sharí'at. By acting according to the Sharí'at, by virtue of the nisbat that this order had with Alláh Ta'álá and His Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم, she attained the forgiveness of her father. This is something to ponder over.

On the topic of this forgiveness and the importance of purdah I wish to end off. There are women also listening in, and should not be left out. Men have ample opportunities to listen to discourses, but they do not have many occasions to listen to these discourses and this discourse is basically meant for them. So, this mas'alah is very important for them. Whether she observes purdah or not, she knows best, but at least, the importance of purdah becomes known. And the taufíq for taubah will follow and the womenfolk will come to know about the punishment for not observing purdah. They are unaware. However, after being made aware – should I tell you? – the effects of these topics coming to the ears of women, women have started adopting purdah.

Just a little while ago, along the way, one person informed me: "An owner of a big cinema, having a massive income, left the cinema business, by the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá – another example of the effect of such talks. Many women have started adopting purdah on their own. This is a sign of the sharáfat of being a sálik – the nobility and virtuous character of the true seeker of Haqq. Previously they were unaware. Now they have been informed. You have seen the effect of nisbat where a person listens to advice given.

Not covering the hair: what happened in the grave

By us, in the district of Saháranpur, there is a town called Mangalore, a woman passed away and was buried. Her brother was among those who

buried her. He was a government employee.

After the burial, when they left he felt for some papers he had with him. He searched his pockets but could not find them. He went to search at home, but could not find them there. He then realised that the papers must have fallen out at the time he was bending down when burying his sister. The papers were some important official papers and not his own personal papers.

He took some other persons with him and had the grave dug up again. He found the envelope with the papers in the grave, but what did he observe? He saw that the hair, which are normally divided into two sections, the section from the right side of the head being placed over the chest on the right side and the section from the left side of the head being placed over the left chest, had become somewhat tangled. His sister's hairs from the right side were entwined around the big toe of the left foot and her hairs from the left side were entwined around the big toe of the right big toe. It formed somewhat like a catapult. As a result her head was pulled up little from the ground and her feet were also pulled up slightly from the ground. He thought to himself: "She must be in considerable discomfort." He stretched his hand to loosen the hair from the toes and he suddenly felt a searing pain in his fingers as he touched the hair. The hair was so terribly hot that he burnt his fingers. He immediately withdrew his hand, quickly re-buried her and went home.

He tried treating his hand, but no remedy could stop the searing pain. He went to a buzurg, who gave him some special water over which he had recited something, to dip his hand in. Whenever he kept his hand in this water he found relief. The moment he withdrew his hand from the water, the pain commenced again. The burning pain remained for some days. He asked the buzurg why this happened to him. The buzurg replied: "It would appear that your sister was not observing purdah with ghair-mahrams. She apparently left her hair uncovered in front of these ghair-mahrams. Alláh Ta'álá serves out punishment according to the crime. Her punishment is through her very hair. The hair have been heated in the fire of Jahannam and entwined around her toes."

Just compare the situation of the other lady from Paris because of the

nisbat of acting according to the Sharí'at, to that of this woman who did not bother about the Sharí'at, and what the results were for both.

These topics came in when we were speaking about Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام. I was saying that he was unaware of the mysteries of Alláh Ta'álá. In the one incident each person received his just deserts

Without knowing it, the traveller on the horse avenged the death of his father, and the rightful owner of the money was restored his wealth. These are unfathomable mysteries. Similarly, in the other incident, the káfir being granted his dying wish of eating fish, so that he may have no good to his credit anymore and enter Jahannam on dying. And the mu'min bandah being deprived the joy of having some olive oil so that, by being deprived of this desire, he was compensated for the one sin for which he had not made taubah, so that he may enter Jannat directly on passing away.

The importance of taubah

Taubah is an act we should never dispense with. After having inadvertently committed a sin, we should make taubah immediately. Not only that, but even after having performed 'ibádat we should also make taubah as completion of that 'ibádat. In any case, when a mu'min bandah makes taubah Alláh Ta'álá is very fond of him. Sin is a filth and impurity. How can He send anyone with the filth of sins on him, into Jannat? One can see that there are certain matters which even the malá'ikah are not aware of, and even a nabí is not aware of and they have to enquire from Alláh Ta'álá.

Concluding the topic of tashabbah

We had digressed when we were discussing the qissah of Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام and the magicians. Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام asked Alláh Ta'álá: "O Alláh! There is something I do not understand: You sent me to Fir'oun for his guidance. He did not accept the invitation to tauhíd, but the magicians who came to challenge me, you gave them the taufíq to bring ímán. They proclaimed, 'We bring ímán on the Rabb of Músá عليهم السلام and Hárún عليهم السلام'. Why so? You granted them the taufíq to bring ímán but deprived Fir'oun of the taufíq of bringing ímán."

What was the reply Alláh Ta'álá gave? These are matters to ponder over.

By coming here you have honoured me. Our sisters and mothers should reflect on this and give it your consideration.

Alláh Ta'álá said: "O Músá, what you say is correct: I did send you for the guidance of Fir'oun, but he performed no such deed that entitled him to be granted the taufíq. However, as far as the magicians are concerned, they had assumed the same type of clothes that you did. When I saw that they had worn the same type of clothes as My nabí, that they were imitating him in their dressing and appearance, I had a feeling of ghairat that they had imitated My nabí, why should I deprive them? Why should I not grant them taufíq on this action of theirs? That is why I granted them the taufíq to bring ímán and they brought ímán."

Do you see? Have you understood the mas'alah of tashabbah? By imitating one who is pious, Alláh Ta'álá granted the taufíq towards the piety of ímán. On the other hand, despite making namáz, etc., have you seen what happened to that person from Makkah Mu'azzamah? Merely on him saying that the ruling of the Christians with regard to the ghusl of janábat was better than that of Islám, he passed away without ímán.

Remember very well that a person's ímán does not slip away right up to the time of death. Ímán is snatched away before death. May Alláh Ta'álá preserve our ímán till the time of our last breath, with izzat and áfiyet. What happens is that ímán is snatched away long before. It is only manifested and revealed at the time of death that the person is dying without ímán. It is at the time of death that the person is shown to have died without ímán, that he was a non-Muslim. Alláhumma fazná – may Alláh Ta'álá safeguard us and preserve our ímán with izzat and áfiyet, till the time of death.

Tashabbah is not an insignificant mas'alah – it is a very grave matter. One should exercise the greatest caution in making any statements or dressing in a way that would be construed as tashabbah.

What can one say? Have you seen also the positive side of tashabbah as well? The magicians imitated Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام with an ulterior motive, yet Alláh Ta'álá's ghairat caused the magicians to be blessed with the taufíq of bringing ímán? Ghairat is also an important quality.

Enter into Islám fully

After discussing all these subjects, the áyet which I had recited initially, has been left out. In connection with this áyet let me state that all these topics will be included in this áyet. This is not the occasion for going into more details. What has Alláh Ta'álá stated in this áyet that was recited?

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا۟ ٱدْخُلُوا۟ فِى ٱلسِّلْمِ كَآفَّةً وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا۟ خُطُوَٰتِ ٱلشَّيْطَٰنِ

O you who believe! Enter into Islam completely [and perfectly] and do not follow the footsteps of Shaitán. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy (S.2.208.)

Ímán is the name given to 'aqá'id – those few concepts that have to be affirmed in the heart. Islám is the name of the expression of the demands of that ímán connected external actions and deeds.

So, what is Alláh Ta'álá saying?

This is what Alláh Ta'álá is saying: The emphasis is: "fully and completely". We have explained the meaning and details of "fully and completely" for some time now. Let us now review the concept. It encompasses 'ibádat, mu'ámulát, mu'ásharat and akhláq, and it also encompasses the mas'alah of tashabbah – these are what Tauhíd demands.

I have stated initially what shierk is. When a wife will not tolerate sharing her husband with another, and a husband will not tolerate sharing his wife with another, how can Alláh Ta'álá tolerate partnerships with Him? There are two categories of shierk, one is shierk-e-jalí (major shierk), which is tantamount to kufr; and the other is shierk-e-khafí (minor shierk) from where the smell of kufr is exuding, contrary to the concept of Tauhíd.

This hasad is not appropriate for a Muslim, one with ímán. It is the quality of Shaitán – he is the first to show this hasad against Hadhrat Ádam عليهم السلام and consequently became accursed. Hasad means objecting to the action of Alláh Ta'álá: Why has He granted another such a big house? Why has He blessed him that he eats lavishly? And so forth. This is not the occasion to go into details. A hint is sufficient for the intelligent.

To continue: Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "O you with ímán (whether you be men or women)! Enter into Islám fully and completely. It must not be that you believe in Rahmán and your 'aqídah is on Rahmán, but in your actions you are in accord with the thinking of Shaitán. Do not walk in the footsteps of

Shaitán; do not fall into the trap set by Shaitán. Is it an intelligent thing to do? Do you not know that Shaitán is your open enemy?"

Dealing with one's enemy

Does one believe what one's enemy tells one? Even if one's enemy were to say something that appears beneficial and for one's well-being, one should not accept it. He is our enemy, even though he gives advice of goodness. Alláh Ta'álá is stating that he is our open foe. In addition he is also the enemy of your forefathers – and you are making friends with him? What is the ghairat within you saying? Are you going to listen to the words of your enemy in contradiction to that of your forefathers? What type of intelligence is this? Do we all understand this? Whether the enemy is one's own or that of one's forefathers, one should not believe in what he says. And Shaitán is your enemy. He is the enemy of Rahmán. Shaitán is the enemy of Alláh Ta'álá, the Rasúl of Alláh صلى الله عليه وسلم and your enemy, so, how can you ever listen to him? He is your open enemy.

The full explanation of this áyet is rather long, and this is not the time to go into the details. However, when this concept has been understood from this áyet, then ponder over the topics that were discussed earlier on. Avoid falling into the traps of Shaitán. Oppose his plans. Some aspects of following him have been mentioned. Whether it be aspects of 'ibádat, mu'ámulát, mu'ásharat or akhláq; or the aspects of tashabbah; or purdah; or approaching others from amongst the creation with softness; or saving oneself from ghussah or kínah – these latter being Shaitání characteristics – we should enter into Islám fully and completely.

Importance of Mondays and Thursdays

Listening and discussing is for the purpose of acting accordingly, for one to focus and ponder on one's shortcomings and weaknesses, and save oneself from these. At the minimum, when the days of Monday and Thursday arrive, one should picture in one's mind the following: "Today, our deeds will be presented to Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. At least let this Monday/ Thursday should pass without me committing any sins." Let these days, at least, pass by with the above thought in mind. Contemplating in this

manner, in-shá-Alláh, these two days will pass without committing sins, and when one keeps on contemplating repeatedly along these lines, a time will come when one will avoid being caught in the clutches of Shaitán, as Alláh Ta'álá knows the talab that is in one. Alláh Ta'álá is the One who blesses with taufíq.

The discourse is approaching its end. Just to emphasise that we should not harbour such negative thoughts that we have a multitude of sins and if we make taubah today we will break the taubah tomorrow. Who can be certain whether the taubah will be maintained or not? Similarly, who can say whether sins will be committed again or not? Having made taubah, at that time the sins are forgiven. So, make taubah every night before sleeping. It may happen that one's rúh departs during the night in one's sleep, and having made taubah before sleeping, one's sins have been forgiven. Also, make this resolve that if there are any rights to fulfil with regard to any person, one will make the effort to fulfil these rights. Alláh Ta'álá is well aware of one's intention. Remember:

اِنَّمَاالْاَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Deeds are judged by their intentions.

So, make a definite point of making taubah at night before sleeping, with remorse in one's heart. And respect the days of Monday and Thursday. And do not let the waswasah of Shaitán enter one's mind that he did not make taubah and that he will not allow you to make taubah. And remember very well that, when the bandah makes taubah with a remorseful heart, the thought of remorse has just occurred, and he has not as yet lifted his hands to plead, Alláh Ta'álá states: "I have accepted your taubah!" Four thousand years before Hadhrat Ádam عليهم السلام was created, Alláh Ta'álá had written on all four sides of the Arsh:

وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِّمَنْ تَابَ

Indeed (definitely but definitely) I shall forgive that person who has made taubah to me. (S.20.82.)

Do not let the thought even come near you that what will happen if the

taubah breaks. If this happens, make taubah again. And if, perchance, it breaks, make taubah again. Mauláná Rúmí رحمة الله عليه writes in his famous compilation, "Al-Mathnawí", addressing those who are káfir, sun-worshippers, fire-worshippers, idolaters:

Alláh Ta'álá states:

"Come away, come away, whatever you may have done, come away. Whether you are a káfir, a sun-worshipper, a fire-worshipper, an idolater, come away. This is Our Royal court. It is not one of hopelessness. Even if your taubah has broken a hundred times, then too, do not give up hope. Even now, if you make taubah, you will be forgiven."

Alláh Ta'álá has desired that we should make taubah:

مَنْ تَابَ تَابَ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ

This means that when any bandah directs his attention towards Alláh Ta'álá, He turns with mercy towards him. Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "Seeing he is turning his attention to Me with remorse, I turn My attention towards him with mercy." Hadhrat Músá عليهم السلام had asked Alláh Ta'álá: "Whose voice is loved by You?" Alláh Ta'álá replied: "The voice of that person who, with remorse, makes taubah – his purified voice is loved by Me. He calls on Me once and I respond to him twice. He calls out: 'Yá Rabbí' and I respond with: 'Labbaik, Labbaik, Yá Abdí,' – I am present, I am present, O My bondsman. What is it that you desire?"

One should never keep oneself aloof from taubah. The court of Alláh Ta'álá is ever open. Alláh Ta'álá states: "There should never be any degree of hopelessness as far as We are concerned. Entertaining the feeling of hopelessness is that of the kuffár:

إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْئَسُ مِنْ رَّوْحِ اللهِ إِلَّاالْقَوْمُ الْكٰفِرُوْنَ ۝

Verily, none despairs of the mercy of Alláh save disbelieving people.
(S.12.87.)

The mu'min is told: Do not feel that there is no hope.

Therefore, at no stage should one be concerned as to what will happen if one's taubah breaks. Tell yourself firmly: "I shall make taubah again! I

shall make taubah again!" As we mentioned, Mauláná Rúmí رحمة الله عليه states, relaying Alláh Ta'álá's statement in these tones:

> *"Come away, come away, whatever you may have done, come away. Whether you are a káfir, a sun-worshipper, a fire-worshipper, an idolater, come away. This is Our Royal court. It is not one of hopelessness. Even if your taubah has broken a hundred times, then too, do not give up hope. Even now, if you make taubah, you will be forgiven."*

Du'á

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us the taufíq to tread along the path of His Orders, with ittibá' of the Sunnat. May Alláh Ta'álá safeguard us from committing sins. If perchance – Alláh Ta'álá forbid! – we should commit any sins, may He grant us the taufíq to make taubah.

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

Khudá háfiz

BOOKLET NUMBER SEVENTEEN
Shábán 1426 – September 2004

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh, once again, solely through the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh رحمة الله عليه – also, not forgetting the valued du'ás of our readers – this seventeenth discourse is ready.

The month of Ramadhán is always a memorable month. This is that special month in the Islámic calendar that causes Muslims all over the world to re-invigorate their ímán. No matter what the condition of the Muslim is, this individual finds it easy to give up bad habits and make more 'ibádat in this blessed month.

This special atmosphere is especially noticeable where there is a masjid

in the locality, where many more people are to be seen coming for the different namáz. People are seen carrying their little packets, dishes and flasks at the time of sunset, ready to break their fasts. With the Taráwíh prayer being performed at night, with the huffáz reciting the Qur'án Sharíf in their melodious voices, this special feeling that pervades during the month of Ramadhán, is more enhanced.

This brings me to Jalálábád: What was the routine there during Ramadhán? Those who had spent Ramadhán there will vouchsafe that this month was really memorable. The khánqáh used to be full, with the overflow of people having to be accommodated in the madrasah section. Taráwíh was performed at various venues, including the Madrasah Masjid as well as in the classrooms. Our Hadhratرحمة الله عليه used to make his Íshá salát in the Muniwálí Masjid but performed the Taráwíh salát in the courtyard in front of the majliskhánah. The interesting part of the Taráwíh salát was that only one háfiz used to perform all twenty rakats, completing the Qur'án Sharíf himsel. Our Hadhratرحمة الله عليه did not approve of the system of two or more huffáz performing the Taráwíh by sharing the twenty rakats between them. This did not allow any one háfiz to recite the whole Qur'án Sharíf by himself in the Taráwíh.

Sehrí was eaten individually and not collectively. Each individual would prepare his own meal and eat it in his room. The same applied to iftár. According to the rules laid down, association with one another was strictly forbidden unless there was a great need to have contact with others. Having meals together or inviting others to one's room in the khánqáh for meals was not allowed. Sálikín also did not sit in i'tikáf, as this would have meant that they would not have been able to attend the various majális that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه conducted.

Sálikín were encouraged to recite more Qur'án Sharíf in this month and, of course, be punctual with their attendance at the majális. There were no collective programmes laid out for those who were staying in the khánqáh.

Seeing that the madrasas were closed during the month of Ramadhán, many 'ulemá came to spend some time in Jalálábád. Their presence created an additional lustre to the place. However, more than their presence, more

than the fact that the khánqáh was full, was the fact that the rúhániyet that emanated from Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه was at an exceptionally high level.

During this month a definite difference was also noted in the content of the majális that our Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه conducted. The topics were discussed at a higher level and many finer points were also discussed. Seeing that there were a significant number of 'ulemá and students present, many aspects were addressed to them specifically.

The majlis that has been translated in this issue of "For Friends" was conducted on the first of Ramadhán 1412, corresponding to the 7th March 1992. Our Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه passed away on the 14th November of the same year. That is, this was our Hadhrat's رحمة الله عليه last Ramadhán.

Our du'á is that Alláh Ta'álá grants us the taufíq to act according to the precious teachings of our Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه.

Dr. I.M.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sahib رحمة الله عليه in Jalálábád, India,on the 1st Ramadhán 1412, corresponding to the 7th March 1992.]

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحْمَدَهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

ROSHNÍ & INDHERÁ – LIGHT & DARKNESS

There is feebleness in my health.

Indherá and roshní – darkness and light – are opposites. Similarly, fujúr (wickedness) and taqwá (piety) are opposites. Light is excellent, but, at times excessive light will cause one to be distressed. There should be i'tidál (equilibrium) in everything. This is the haqíqat and this is the yaqín of all the Ambiyá عليهم السلام.

Adl (justice) and be-adlí (injustice)

If there is be-adlí from others towards one, but from oneself one should not stop behaving with adl. Do you understand? To repeat: If there is be-adlí from others, but from oneself one should not leave the reigns of adl in one's behaviour to them. To have developed this degree of adl and have it entrenched in one's temperament, is referred to as Maqáme-Adl.

For example: The wife does not behave with adl. She follows the route of be-adlí. Perfection (kamál) is that the husband should not discard adl in his behaviour with such a wife when she exhibits her be-adlí. What kamál is it to behave in a good manner with one whose behaviour is good? To behave correctly with evil people – this is an act of kamál! This is husne-Sulúk (beautiful manners)! From this husne-Sulúk there enters beautification in one's Sharí'at. There is another way of putting it: until husne-Sulúk – here the term "Sulúk" refers to "Tasawwuf" – has not been attained, husne-Sharí'at can never be achieved. And husn (beauty) is liked by everybody – in everybody's eyes it is a quality that is loved. And why should husne-Sharí'at not be loved by everybody?

That is why "Sharí'at" has been attached to "Taríqat," irrespective of whether you call it "Tasawwuf" or "Sulúk" or whether you call it "Haqíqat," because the true meaning of Taríqat is as follows: Whatever task, in whatever manner, at whatever time, we have been ordered to perform, to perform that task in that manner, is called Taríqat.

Sharí'at is: Ahkáme-munazzal min-Alláh: Those orders which have been sent down by Alláh Ta'álá. These Ahkáme-munazzal min-Alláh may be connected to the záhir or to the bátin. Only when one observes and gives full consideration to the directions which accompanied the orders, at the time of carrying out the orders, will it be said that the orders have been carried out. This would be termed Taríqat. If one were to deviate from the directions that accompanied these orders, this would not be termed discharging these orders.

Now, darkness (zulmat) has its methodology and light (roshní) also has its methodology – there is a need for equilibrium in both. If one deviates from the adl, it means that one has deviated from the correct method and

the moment one deviates from the correct method, it cannot be termed as having performed the task.

Tawádhu (humility) and takabbur (arrogance)

Take tawádhu and takabbur: Tawádhu is a light, radiance (roshní). Takabbur is darkness (indherá.) There should be i'tidál in both. There should adl in both. You present here are sáhibe-'ilm ('ulemá). You are aware that in the Sharí'at both ifrát and tafrít are forbidden. The position between ifrát and tafrít is called adl .

The reality of takabbur is something else. There is takabbur-súrí and takabbur-haqíqí. Takabbur-súrí is one thing and takabbur-haqíqí is something else. Until takabbur-haqíqí has not been eliminated and tawádhu-haqíqí has not been achieved, it is ná-já'iz to utilise takabbur-súrí. Until tawádhu-haqíqí has not set in, it is not correct to make use of what is contrary to tawádhu. Otherwise one will suffer harm and one will land up in difficulties. One will not be able to safeguard one's honour. One will not be able to save oneself from situations of disgrace, whereas it is fardh to save oneself from situations of humiliation.

Honour and disgrace

Some situations appear to be those of disgrace but may not be so! Listen carefully now, for this is how this old is man presenting it to you!

Sometimes the situations have the appearance of disgrace, but they are situations of honour in the eyes of others, even though the sense of it being honourable is absent within oneself.

For example: You are going somewhere along the rural area. You come across another person sitting with a bundle of something or other. As you are passing by him, he calls out: "Ají Mianjí!"

You have a proper beard; you are wearing a kurtah as well, neither a mini-one nor the long one of the style of the Arabs, but of some length; and the legs of your izár are above your ankles, so you appear to be a "Mianjí" in the eyes of onlookers. And you, incidentally, are also an 'álim, one who has graduated as an 'álim from a dárul-'ulúm.

So, this person sitting there calls out: "Ají Mianjí! Are you just passing

by indifferently? It appears that you have no compassion within you. You should at least have enquired of me: ‘You have this bundle next to you and you are sitting down. Why are you just sitting?’Ají Mianjí, come here. Mulláhjí, come here. This bundle is very heavy. I can carry it on my head, but lifting it up is very difficult. I did not realise how heavy it was. Carrying it on my head is also difficult. Just see how old I am and what I am capable of? You are young, má-shá-Alláh and at your age you have greater capabilities. You are able to lift it and carry it for me, for it appears very difficult for me to carry it on my head. How nice would it not be if you could carry it on your head for me and take it to my house.”

So, in appearance – externally, súratan – this would be disgraceful for you to do so. Is that not so? However, this act would be an honourable act in the eyes of others. Do you understand? In reality, it is not disgraceful. It is only so in appearance. If one has even a little trace of takabbur, one will not tolerate the apparent disgrace. And if one possesses tawádhu haqíqatan, then this apparent humiliation will be adopted.

You have learnt it off and even taught it to others, the Hadíth Sharíf that states:

لَا يَنْبَغِيْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ اَنْ يَّذِلَّ نَفْسَهُ

It is not the shán of the mu’min to disgrace himself.

Yes, you have learnt it off and even taught it to others, but you have not recognised the appropriate occasion. You have not recognised the appropriate situation. You considered the situation presenting itself to be that of humiliation: “Me! Carry that bundle on my head? What if I meet my friends and acquaintances, what looks will they not give me? And the Hadíth Sharíf clearly states that one should save oneself from situations of disgrace, so how can I tolerate such a humiliating position?”

Initially, being an ’álim, you already took offence at being called “Mianjí” and “Mulláhjí”. You forgot that a long time ago, all the great and the very great personalities were called “Mulláhjí”. For example: Mulláh Jívan, who was a great ’álim, the ustád of Hadhrat ‘Álamgír رحمة الله علي. Mulláh Jámí, whose kitáb, the shareh of “Káfí,” you have studied. Such great personalities

were called "Mulláh". But nowadays, being addressed by the term "Mulláh" is not tolerated. Why is this term not tolerated? The reason is that the term "Mulláh" has taken on another meaning – it is considered to be an undignified term in the eyes of people, an insulting term. Yet, there was an age when this term was used commonly for great, great 'ulemá. This term is now applied to the mu'azzin of the masjid or for those who are very low in the social scale. This term has become thus decayed. However, one has to recognise who the person who is using this term. If it is an ordinary, unsophisticated person, a peasant from the farmlands, then his using the term "Mulláhjí" should not be offensive.

A qissah about simplicity and muhabbat

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه was standing in front of the courtyard, under the covered area. A person came up to him, made salám and musáfahah. Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه asked: "From where have you come?" He replied: "I have come from Pánípat." "What have you come for?" He took Hadhratwálá's name, saying simply: "I have come to see Ashraf Alí."

One often sees in books that the author's name is written without any titles, simply Ashraf Ali, without adding "Sáhib". Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "I am Ashraf Alí – people call me Ashraf Alí."

Can you hear me? The person from Pánípat said: "Oh no. It's not you." He addressed Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه with the informal "tú" and not the more respectful word: "áp," never mind saying even respectfully "Hadhrat". Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "And why not?" He repeated: "No, it's not you." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه asked: "How do you know that I am not, when I am telling you I am Ashraf Ali?" He said: "He is very handsome." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "How do you know this?" He said: "He had once come to Pánípat to give a lecture. I saw him. He was very handsome." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه asked: "And how long ago was that?" The person from Pánípat mentioned that it was something like twenty or thirty years ago! "That many years ago, that is when I saw him." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "At that time I was in my youth. Now I am gone old. Where will you still find the same handsomeness?" The Pánípatí responded: "Not so. You are telling lies. You are not Ashraf Alí!"

There was a mauláná-sáhib from Keráná sitting nearby. He had a very white complexion and his beard was not gone very white as yet. Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "Very well. Then it must be that person." The Pánípatí turned around and looked at him. "No, he is too white. It is not him either." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "It is not him and it is not me. Fine, then go and ask somebody."

At that time there were some building operations taking place and there were some workers around. This person went to them. Whoever he asked, gave the same reply: "That is the person whom you are enquiring about. He is the one." Finally, he was convinced, seeing that everybody was giving the same reply. He came running back and was about to fall at the feet of Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه who grabbed hold of him, preventing him from doing so. "Oh, oh. What are you doing?" The Pánípatí said: "It is you! Forgive me my mistake." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "Nothing to worry about. It is a question of non-recognition. My heart is happy. Now tell me: why did you come?" He said: "I was busy with my work, when the thought of you came to me and my heart told me to go and see you. So I left and came here. I came just to see you again." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "Is there some work you have to do here then?" He replied: "I have not come for any work. I came to see you. My heart had muhabbat for you and the urge was there to see you. Now that I have seen you, I am going back home. Assalámo-alaikum." He left.

Now, the words with which he addressed Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه and calling him a liar on top of it, would appear to be slanderous, you will agree. In appearance it was slanderous, but not so in reality (haqíqatan). Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه recognised the nature of the person presenting himself. He, thus, tolerated his manner of speaking and he was not upset in the least. Was he offended? Not at all. To the contrary, he was happy. The manner in which some people use the formal "Hadhrat" is like the piercing of an arrow! On the other hand, the use of the informal "tú" by others causes a glitter to enter the heart and makes a person happy. In such instances, the word "Hadhrat" is a cause for disgrace and the word "tú" is a cause for honour.

Do you see what tawádhu is and what takabbur is? What light is and what

darkness is?

These are principles that are being enunciated. The ramifications you can work out when the occasions arise. However, the task of making deductions is not for everybody. Whosoever has developed within himself correct capabilities of deduction, will be able to do this. His deductions will be correct. As I have mentioned earlier, only that person who has developed tawádhu-haqíqí embedded in his heart, with no iota of takabbur remaining in him, may resort to takabbur-súratan. That person who has not developed "maleke-izále-razílah" (permanent eradication of the akhláqe-razílah) and imbued himself with "maleke-tawádhu-e-haqíqí (permanent true humility) is not permitted to adopt takabbur-súratan.

Mauláná Abdur-Rabb Sáhib's encounter with Nawáb-sáhib's security guard

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه mentioned the following incident:

There was a mauláná from Delhi. His name was Mauláná Abdur-Rabb Sáhib. You may have heard of the well-known "Madrasah Abdur-Rabb" in Delhi, named after him.

Now, Mauláná Abdur-Rabb Sáhib was a guest of a nobleman, a nawább Sáhib, in Mírath. On his way back from Mírath on the way to Delhi, he stopped over in Deoband. The 'ulemá came to meet him and he related to them what had happened to him while he was a guest at the nobleman's mansion in Mírath:

"I had gone to Mírath, where I was a guest of such and such a Ra'ís and an incident took place there involving me. What happened? Well, in the middle of the night, out of the blue, for some unknown reason, I had a tremendous urge to answer the call of nature. I got out of bed and proceeded to the toilet. Now, I did not know that the toilet for guests and others was separate and that the Nawáb-sáhib had a special toilet reserved for his personal use. The toilet that I entered happened to be the special one reserved for the Nawáb-sáhib! When I came out of this toilet, it so happened that the Nawáb-sáhib's security guard happened to be passing by on his security round. He barked at me with harshness, in a reprimanding tone: 'Who are you?'

"I quickly thought to myself: 'Abdur-Rabb, if you were to adopt the

humility of the ’ulemá of Deoband at this point in time, you will suffer such a beating that you will not be able to stand up after that!’ I told myself: ‘It is not appropriate to adopt the posture of humility of the ’ulemá of Deoband at this moment.’ So, I barked back at him: ‘Who are you shouting at? Don’t you know who I am? I am Hadhrat Mauláná Abdur-Rabb Sáhib of Delhi!’

“My tone was such that he was visibly shaken, for it appeared that I was a special guest of the Nawáb-sáhib! The guard, completely cowed, immediately started apologising: ‘Huzúr, I ask to be forgiven!’ I stuck to my role: ‘Asking for forgiveness are you?’ ‘Huzúr, I did not recognise you.’ ‘Did not recognise me...? Wait till morning comes...!’ ‘Huzúr, do not report me to the Nawáb-sáhib! He will dismiss me. I have a wife and children to support. I will become poverty-stricken! For the sake of Alláh Ta’álá, forgive me!’

“The poor chap was truly humbled. When I saw that he was completely subdued, I said: ‘Fine. Very well. I forgive you. You can go. I will not say anything.’ I forgave him.”

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said that when he had said this, a smile had come to his lips. He had continued: “That was not an occasion for displaying tawádhu. It was an occasion for displaying apparent, outward, súrí-takabbur. Or else I would have been beaten so severely that my life would have been at stake! That is why I adopted apparent, súrí-takabbur on that occasion to avoid difficulty and disgrace befalling me.”

Have you some idea now? He had tawádhu-haqíqí and there was no trace of takabbur in him. However, that was an occasion of adopting súrí-takabbur and not displaying his normal humility. Also, from his statement: “It was not appropriate to adopt the posture of humility of the ’ulemá of Deoband,” one can assess that the ’ulemá of Deoband had within them the highest degree of tawádhu in their temperaments in that age.

The tawádhu of Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib

Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib was somebody with great tawádhu. Once there was a jalsah of a madrasah in Kámpur. Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib, who was known as Sheikhul-Hind, was also a guest.

Incidentally, Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه used to be upset at this title and used to comment: "Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib was at that level of being Sheikhul-'Álim, not merely of the subcontinent of India (Hind). I am amazed that he is referred to as Sheikhul-Hind." Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib was the tutor of Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه. He was not the sadr-mudarris at that time – Mauláná Ya'qúb Sáhib was the sadr-mudarris.

To continue: There was an 'álim from Aligarh, Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib. He was a great scholar and he excelled especially in the science of mathematics. Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí was a famous Logician and Philosopher. In his era Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí used to say: "In the whole of Hindustán, there are only two and a half 'álims." He counted himself as one, his father as the second and Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib of Aligarh, as half an 'álim. In his opinion the 'ulemá of Deoband were completely excluded! The reality was that the 'ulemá of Deoband – speaking of their whole academic lifestyles – were an embodiment of Fiqah and Hadíth. They glittered in these fields. They had great expertise in the field of Logic, but they did not immerse themselves completely in this field. Based on this Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí held the view that the 'ulemá of Deoband had no special affinity for the science of Logic. On the other hand, he considered himself to be uniquely eminent in this field.

Never mind the 'ulemá of Deoband, even Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd رحمة الله عليه nephew of Sháh Abdul-Azíz رحمة الله عليه whose era had just passed, was not given any consideration.

Sháh Ismá'íl Shahíd رحمة الله عليه replies while swimming

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه related another incident:

Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí sent an 'álim with some questions pertaining to Logic, with the instructions: "Go to Mauláná Ismá'íl Sáhib and have him solve them."

Now, Sháh Ismá'íl Shahíd رحمة الله عليه was pre-occupied with the concept of jihád. In order to wage jihád, several forms of training are necessary. One does not know what situations one may come across during jihád at the practical level. So, Sháh Ismá'íl Shahíd رحمة الله عليه used to walk barefoot on the

stone-laid courtyard of the Jámi'ah Masjid in Delhi in the heat of summer. The reason was to be prepared for the vicissitudes to be found on the battlefield. What if one had no shoes, how would one fare? He also trained himself to be a good swimmer: he used to go to swim in the River Jamná, which flows through the one end of Delhi. After Asr he used to swim from one bank to the other and back.

It is important to be acquainted with the histories of our akábir. What type of people were they? Those who have passed on before us were such that they were people without match!

Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd رحمة الله عليه was also a Háfizul-Qur'án. His practice was that, when he started his swim in the River Jamná, he would start reciting the Qur'án Sharíf. Reciting all the way while swimming from the one bank to the other and then back in the direction of Delhi, he used to make a khatam of the Qur'án Sharíf! He would then proceed to the Jámi'ah Masjid to perform his Maghrib namáz with jamá'at. This was his practice with regard to swimming.

So, at the time that he went into the River Jamná for his normal swim, the 'álim sent by Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí, arrived with the questions. He addressed Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd رحمة الله عليه: "I have been sent by Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí Sáhib. He has some questions on Logic for you to solve." Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd رحمة الله عليه said: "You can carry on asking the questions and I will give my replies. You write them down as I speak." The 'álim did as instructed and put forward the questions, while Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd رحمة الله عليه gave his replies on the turn. So, while swimming along the bank of the river, Mauláná Ismá'íl Shahíd رحمة الله عليه gave his replies to all the questions.

This was the person whom Mauláná Abdul-Haqq Khairábádí thought had no inkling of the science of Logic! Can you gauge his calibre? Do you see the calibre of our akábir, of the lineage and nisbat of Sháh Walíyulláh رحمة الله عليه? The 'ulemá akábir of Deoband have their academic lineage from Sháh Walíyulláh رحمة الله عليه. The publishing and propagation, especially of fiqah and Hadíth Sharíf, have come down from Sháh Walíyulláhرحمة الله عليه..

Let us now continue with the previous qissah: The Jalsah in Kámpur was taking place. Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib had also been invited but had not

arrived as yet. The turn of Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib came to deliver his lecture. During the course of his lecture, there was a slight commotion. Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib had arrived. People turned around to look to see who had come. He was well known and a whisper went about: "Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib has arrived! Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib has arrived!" Noting the slight commotion Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib also looked up. When his gaze fell on Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib, he abruptly ended his talk. Having rounded up his sentence in a few words, he finished off.

Are you listening?

Some of his students from the dárul-'ulúm who had gone with him to the Jalsah, as happens that a sheikh will take some of his muríds with him, felt very disappointed at this. It was not the habit of Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib to deliver lectures. However, on this occasion he had made an exception and his talk was full of amazing proofs, arguments and counter-arguments. The students felt very heart-sore. They were aware that Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib Alígarhí did not have a high opinion of the 'ulemá of Deoband. He had no real respect for them in his heart. So, the students were naturally very disappointed and also very puzzled, as this was an occasion to demonstrate the capabilities of the 'ulemá of Deoband.

When Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib came to meet them, greetings took place and after the scheduled proceedings of the Jalsah were attended to, they then retired to the places allocated to them. Some of the students asked Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib: "Hadhrat, what did you do? This was the ideal opportunity to have continued your lecture. Mauláná Lutfulláh Sáhib would have come to realise that the 'ulemá of Deoband were not devoid of providing proofs arguments and counter-arguments in the science of Logic. He would have heard your lecture with his own ears but, Hadhrat, you kept quiet." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه went on to say that Hadhrat Mauláná Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib said: "Very true. This very thought that you are expressing, came to me as well."

Are you all listening?

He continued: "And I thought to myself: 'If I were now to continue with my lecture it would be to show off my greatness, a manifestation of pride

and conceit. It will not be for the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá or for the Díní benefit of the listeners. It would be for myself and not for the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá – ridhá-e-Iláhí.' So, I kept quiet."

Is my voice reaching you? Do you see the qualities of our akábir? In other words, there is no room for waswasah. No room is left for such a thought, when it comes to mind and then to keep it in one's mind. Do you understand? Takabbur, riyá and 'ujub: these are controlled in such a manner that not even a single waswasah is allowed to intrude. Do you see the reality of tawádhu? Do you see the extinction of takabbur? Have you pondered over it?

Light and darkness are our topics. Tawádhu is light and takabbur is darkness. Tawádhu-haqíqí and takabbur-haqíqí and tawádhu-súrí and takabbur-súrí, are not permissible to be utilised by everybody. This is for certain individuals who have become like these individuals. Which type of individuals? These are those who have haqíqí nisbat ma-Alláh.

So, who are these who have haqíqí nisbat ma-Alláh? These are those who have attained a nafs that is mutma'innah. Again: Who are these? These are those with nafs-mutma'innah. In the Qur'án Sharíf the nafs is mentioned as one but can exist three states. I had spoken on this previously.

The nafse-mutma'innah

One state is nafse-ammárah. The Qur'án Sharíf mentions this:

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوْٓءِ

Verily, the nafse-ammárah incites to evil.(S.12.53.)

Its basic component, its innate disposition, is to commit evil. This statement of Hadhrat Yúsuf عليه السلام has mentioned in the Qur'án Sharíf by Alláh Ta'álá. Was the Aziz's wife not running after him and did he not flee from her to save his life? This was in the royal palace.

Are you listening attentively to my words? You are? Excellent! There are lessons in these. With the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá, there are lessons to be learnt in all these.

A youth avoids Shaitán's net by an amazing strategy

Incidentally, something else comes to mind. Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه related this to us. You find those with money, in search of comfort and pleasure, will have servants – young boys, girls and women – to do all their work for them: to cook and clean, to make up the beds and so forth. There are many among these who are big gossipers, carrying tales from here to there and from there to here. Also, they are full of many titillating, alluring and provocative stories.

A youth, very handsome, was passing by. In a mansion along the way there lived a young lady. She was of a good, well-to-do home. It so happened that she was alone at home – her parents had gone somewhere in the neighbourhood for some necessary work. Standing at the entrance of the mansion was one of these mischievous maids. On seeing the handsome youth approaching, she quickly went inside and instigated the young lady of the house: "There is such a marvellous and handsome youth outside!" "Go quickly and call him," the young lady responded. He was called on the pretext that the young lady in the mansion was ill. "Please make dam on her. You appear to be a durwesh from your appearance." He went in, unsuspectingly.

Some people are innocent and trusting. The young lady addressed him: "Come in, come in. My illness is such that I need you to fulfil my desires." The door behind him had been locked. He became terrified. What to do? He suddenly clutched his stomach. He grimaced and said: "Ofo! My stomach has a severe cramp! Instruct your bándí to place some water for me in the toilet."

In those days the toilets had no running sewerage like we have these days. Water had to be taken specifically to the toilet for istinjá and the night-soil was removed by special groups of cleaners.

The water was placed in the toilet for him and he went out. One does not know whether there was some excreta lying there or he had a bowel action but, in any case, he took the faeces and smeared some on his face, some on his hands and some on his clothes. With this the flies also started swarming around him. In this amazing condition, he re-entered the bedroom. The young lady saw him and started screaming at the bándí: "A mad man! What madman did you bring here? Get out! Get him out from here!" The bándí

opened the door and let him out.

You understood the strategy the youth used to save himself? On the other hand, take our youth, our young men: should they see some beautiful girl they will try different schemes to meet her. Whereas, in the incident just mentioned, without wanting to, he had a beautiful lady within his reach but he devised a scheme to escape her clutches. He was at the stage of nafse-mutma'innah.

Do you now recognise this phase of the nafs, nafse-mutma'innah, or not yet? This is what it means to have haqíqí nisbat ma-Alláh. Those who are older will relate these incidents to the younger people, to the tálib, from person to person – from Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه to me and then from me to you. These are not related without real reasons. To the tálibe-tazkíyah, to the person in the khánqáh, to the sincere and truthful searcher, these have lessons in them. "Ofo! This is an amazing effect of having a nafse-mutma'innah." Faeces – something which ná-pák – was taken in his bare hands and smeared on his face and arms and on his clothes and then he presented himself to her. She was revolted by the sight and the smell of him and got rid of him, screaming: "A mad man! What madman did you bring here? Get out! Get him out from here!" He went home, changed his soiled clothes and put on clean clothes.

Is my voice reaching you?

This same youth was once going somewhere, sometime before the above incident took place. Along the way he had come across Shaitán, who was carrying a net with him. This person had addressed Shaitán, saying: "Prepare a net for me also. The net you are carrying looks beautiful." Shaitán had replied: "Very well. I shall see to it some time."

Now, after the above incident, the youth again met Shaitán along the way and said: "Where is my net? I had asked you to prepare one for me also." Shaitán replied: "Arè yár! I had prepared a net for you! However, you became insane!"

It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf:

اَلنِّسَاءُ حِبَالَةُ الشَّيَاطِيْنِ

Women are the nets (snares) of Shaitán.

So, Shaitán said that he had prepared such a net for him, but instead of falling into his net, he resorted to the ploy of appearing insane. How did he resort to this scheme of appearing mad? It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf:

لَا يُؤْمِنُ اَحَدَكُمْ حَتّٰى اَنْ يَّقَالَ لَهٗ اِنَّهٗ لَمَجْنُوْنَ

This means: *"Just see, O you mu'mins, you will not be kámil mu'mins until those who see you do not tell you that you are mad, completely mad."*

Did the kuffár and mushrikín not tell Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم that he was mad? Yes, they did! Nowadays, do not the general populace, the intellectuals, the politicians and national leaders, say: "How much knowledge do the 'ulemá have? What do the 'ulemá know? Just see from where to where has the world not progressed! From where to where has the world not advanced! What do these 'ulemá know? This is the age of progress. Man has reached the moon already. What do the 'ulemá know? 'Ulemá have no knowledge of today's world."

Status of the 'ulemá and politics

This is the label the 'ulemá have been given in this age, from the intellectuals, from the politicians, from the leaders of the nation. Yet, what did my Hadhrat say? Was he not in the final age and most recent period? What should I say? In his age, my Hadhrat was the essence, the sum total and a faultless jewel of all the auliyá-Alláh, 'ulemá and pious predecessors. I have heard with my own ears, in the very special majális that used to take place in the mornings, Hadhrat saying... What did he say? He said: "Whatever ahwál (spiritual states) that had been experienced by the preceding auliyá-Alláh, those very háláts I have also experienced." And he also said.... What did he say? Well, you have heard of Mansúr of days gone by, the one who had proclaimed "An-al-Haqq!" and who was executed after being found guilty of blasphemy. Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said, concerning this incident: "Were I present at that time, I would not have allowed Mansúr to be taken to the scaffold to be executed." I am relating matters that I have heard with my own ears.

To continue: What else did Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه say, in this last era, taking into account all the conditions prevailing at the time? "The politics

of this age is different. Our ’ulemá should avoid getting involved in these politics. Our ’ulemá will not be able to support and sustain the politics of this age. Let those intellectuals who have come here after having studied in England, get involved in politics. Yes, your duties are to mix with them, develop informality with them and make tablígh to them. Allow them to rule. The nature of politics in this age is such. And the rank that you hold, the duty that you have to carry out is to associate with them and develop an informal relationship with them and make tablígh to them so that, in time to come, they come to know the Sharí’ah laws and the politicians come to accept these and act on the Sharí’ah.

Let them study and let them rule. However, tablígh should be made to them. Now, those making tablígh, should they be ordinary people approaching such people? Remember, these are people with status, be it from the point of view of their noble family lineage, or their education, or from being well-bred, or from being cultured. So, should just an ordinary person go and make tablígh amongst them? There was a time when the ’ulemá also were men of status, being from noble lineage, being cultured, being well-mannered, having perfection in rhetoric and having perfection in eloquence. These are the ones who should go to them.

Just see. Wait and see. See what? It is not a question of being rich or being poor. It is a question of family nobility (khándán). It is not in everybody’s nature to follow those of a lower khándán – not everybody has the temperament to incline to those of a lower family lineage.

The Ambiyá عليهم السلام, those who were given nabúwat, all came from very, very noble families. They were not from a low lineage. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was descended from a very noble family from among the Arabs, even though he was raised in poverty. What is so special about family nobility and lineage? Leave aside the present times. This age is full of fitnahs. Even those from very noble and honourable families, have not maintained their noble positions. This is the result of television, bringing its tablígh from the west. Otherwise, those who were of great and noble families were a category apart. We have seen them, we have met them and we have interacted with them. Without being “educated”, yet they were very highly cultured. They possessed amazing manners. They had amazing etiquettes.

If wrong teachings were not imbibed, or if no learning was attained, or if correct learning was pursued, a person became even more cultured.

The ’ulemá of those days were told by Hadhratwálá: “Let them involve themselves in politics. Let them rule. But you make tablígh amongst them, so that their temperaments turn towards the laws of the Sharí’ah in their national politics and their administration.

As I was saying: My Hadhrat was the essence and sum total of all the ’ulemá and auliyá-Alláh.

The status of ’ilm cannot tolerate hirs and tama’

Let us continue: Take ’ilm: can it tolerate hirs and tama’? Can ’ilm tolerate greed and avarice? ’Ilm: what is meant by this word? Does it refer to secular education or Dín? It refers to Dín and wahí. If this is the case, then can ’ilm tolerate deception and sycophancy? Can it adopt, on an ikhtiyárí basis, slander and disgrace? Mind you, I am using the word ikhtiyárí. Ghair-ikhtiyárí is another matter. I had mentioned previously, if told to carry this big burden home for someone in distress, is it ikhtiyárí or ghair-ikhtiyárí? It is ghair-ikhtiyárí. Is this disgraceful? This would not be disgraceful.

لَا يَنْبَغِيْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ اَنْ يَّذِلَّ نَفْسَهُ

It is far from the dignity of a mu’min that he adopts any activity that will lead to his disgrace in the eyes of people. The word “ay-yuzilla” is used. This refers to ikhtiyárí activity. What is ghair-ikhtiyárí is excluded. So, now do you understand the difference?

The talk, in the beginning, was on tawádhu and takabbur; light and darkness. So, a mu’min should not voluntarily adopt from his side such activities that will be disgrace on him in the eyes of the people, that people think him contemptible. Ghair-ikhtiyárí is another matter.

Qissah: the humility of Mauláná Muzaffar Husain Sáhib

Take the situation with our Mauláná Muzaffar Husain Sáhib. He was a great ’álim, abstinent, muttaqí, highly respected in the community. He lived in Kándlah. Mostly, the ’ulemá of Kándlah were noblemen. He dressed very plainly and simply.

On one occasion he was going somewhere. Co-incidentally, a policeman,

having just alighted at the railway station, was going to the police station with his luggage. Seeing this person in his simple attire, he ordered him in commanding tones: “Come here! Carry my luggage! I’m on my way to the police station. Take my luggage there!” Mauláná Muzaffar Husain Sáhib lifted the luggage as ordered, placed it on his head and carried it to the police station.

When they reached there, the policeman ordered: “Good. Leave it here!” It so happened that the police superintendent knew Mauláná Muzaffar Husain Sáhib. Understandably upset at the policeman’s audaciousness in getting Mauláná to carry his luggage, he stood up and was about to reprimand the policeman, but Mauláná Muzaffar Husain Sáhib quickly spoke up: “He is weak and tired and was in need of assistance, so I helped the poor chap carry his luggage. Do not tell him anything!” The superintendent had great respect for Mauláná and said nothing to the policeman.

Do you see? Did he adopt what is ikhtiyárí or ghair- ikhtiyárí? He had adopted what was ghair-ikhtiyárí. Is there respect in his action or disgrace? Respect, because he was ordered to do so and he did not do so voluntarily. To have acted voluntarily in this way is forbidden.

It is not in the capability of everyone to utilise light and darkness to a degree of fairness and justice; according to the demands of place, person and situation. That is why the muslih, the guide and mentor, fills the ears of the tálibáne-isláh, the tálibáne-tazkíyah, with every type of teaching and causes these to settle in their hearts, so that they may apply it correctly and act accordingly when the situation demands.

Do you understand? Until the haqá’iq for differing situations are not brought forth, how is the poor student of tazkíyah to know? The sheikh is not going to remain with you forever. Hadhratwálá used to say that the teachings of the sheikh will remain. The tálibe-sádiq, mukhlis, who listens attentively with correct i’tiqád to every word and allows these words to settle firmly in his heart, will find the teachings of his sheikh with him all the time. The tálib will now develop light in his heart, from adopting taqwá and making an abundance of zikr and from muráqabát.

The foremost is taqwá. An abundance of zikr or muráqabát does not take priority over taqwá. This is termed correct nisbat, correct attachment to

Alláh Ta'álá. Mere muráqabah, without taqwá, is not correct nisbat with Alláh Ta'álá. The first and foremost is taqwá. To embellish this, there is the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá, to embellish this is also the contemplation of Alláh Ta'álá.

There may be roshní, but there is no recognition of a particular item – there may be light, but no item is seen with it. So, will the light enable one to grasp the item which the light was supposed to reveal? The answer is no. That is the position of taqwá.

The qissah of Mauláná Muzaffar Husain Sáhib has been mentioned. Bear it in mind. He had adopted what was ghair- ikhtiyárí, in which there is no disgrace. The term "ay-yuzilla" is used. Grammatically, it is not "feil-e-lázmí" (an action that terminates in itself) but "feil-e-tá'diyah" (an action that is continuous).

Istigná (independence) and its opposite be-istigná:

Qissah of the prince visiting a nobleman

Those who are from nobility possess amazing manners and culture. Hadhratwálá narrated an incident concerning istigná and bé-istigná:

There was a prince from Iran who had come to India for a holiday. During his travels he also came into contact with a particular nobleman. The nobleman told him: "Seeing you are here on holiday, this here is my address – should you come my way, please do come and pay me a visit." The prince replied: "Very well. Will do so."

Those who are big-shots in the world, have a habit of being extravagant (isráf). In the context of their status, they tend to be wasteful. For them to recognise an appropriate place, person and occasion is very difficult. It was the same with this prince from Iran. While travelling and spending, his financial condition deteriorated. He reached a situation of impoverishment. Even his clothes, instead of showing his princely status, evidenced his degraded state. While in this condition, he thought of the offer of the nobleman he had met. He still had his address with him. He decided to go and visit him.

When the nobleman saw him in this abject and weak condition, he brazenly recited a couplet in Fársí to the prince:

When the temperament of a lion (being a lion) changes to that of a jackal,

He goes begging with his needs to the doors of others.

Having previously seen the prince in his royal splendour and witnessing his poverty now, the nobleman read this couplet. However, after all, the prince was from royalty. Without any hesitation, as his repartee, he also recited a couplet with an air of complete independence and nonchalance.

You have not seen a real lion.

What you may have seen is an artificial lion.

No matter what the condition of a masculine lion descends to,

Despite his needs, he still lashes out with his sharp claws!

The prince, having recited this rejoinder, turned around and started walking away. The nobleman realised his indiscretion and error, and apologised profusely, again and again, but the prince retorted: "You are not worthy of associating with." He left.

From this you will be able to see what istigná is. That prince from Iran was a worldly person. He was not one who possessed 'ilme-Dín and 'ilme-wahí. In comparison to the worldly person, one can gauge to what degree of qalbí istigná that person should have in whom the knowledge of Dín has entered and to whom 'ilme-wahí has reached.

What was the reason that Hadhratwálá related this incident to us? In order to compare the two. In the above incident, was it not a matter of disgrace for the prince to still meet the nobleman after the latter had recited that insulting couplet? Yes, it would have been dishonourable for him still to meet him. So, he did not meet him.

So, what did Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم state to the general mu'min community? Remember that whatever Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم stated was, in actual fact, what Alláh Ta'álá wanted him to say:

لَا يَنْبَغِيْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ اَنْ يَّذِلَّ نَفْسَهُ

What about that person who, besides being from among the general mu'minín, is also an 'álim, what then? And, being a mu'min and an 'álim, he is also a sáhib-e-tazkíyah, a sáhib-e-tarbiyet, what then? What degree

of istigná must he not have! At times there is some admixture, some contamination occurring in istigná and istikbár (pride/ conceit.) Istigná is light. Istikbár is darkness. To be able to recognise the admixture is not everybody's work. Yes, with the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá, that person will be able to do it, who is a sáhib-e-tazkíyah, sádiq, mukhlis, with his gaze on the hereafter, with a nafs that is kept at the level of mutma'innah, one who can recognise the difference between light and darkness and one who is able to act on adl and insáf.

At times, another person may come forward with injustice and treat him unjustly, but this tálib-e-tazkíyah will not allow the reigns of adl to slip from his hands. May Alláh Ta'álá make it that we can understand! This is what is termed tazkíyah; this is what is called Taríqat and Sulúk. This is that Sharí'ah that will not be manifested as Sharí'ah without husne-Sulúk.

Repetition is beneficial

Just see: Hadhrat Alí رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ had thrown the káfir enemy on the ground and was saddled on his chest, about to slay him...

An incident may be repeated several times in order that a certain concept settles down firmly in the heart of the tálibáne-tazkíyah, so that on the right occasion, without making an effort at remembering and without having to stop to think of the solution, the correct reaction springs up spontaneously in his mind and he acts accordingly. In the Qur'án Sharíf as well, one finds certain incidents narrated at several different places, often with a slightly different perspective, so that Alláh Ta'álá is telling us: "The related lessons may be settled firmly in the hearts of My mu'min bandah and that My dispensation comes to be known – what is My methodology (ádatulláh) – when, with whom and in what manner."

Similarly, the muslih will relate an incident several times on different occasions and in different majális. A person may think: "I have heard this before, many times." Yes, you may have heard it before, but has it settled in your heart? Has the lesson been learnt? Have you acted accordingly when the situation presented itself before you? Have you attained that firmness?

A qissah: Hadhrat Alí رضی الله تعالی عنه reacting to being spat in the face

We heard Hadhratwálá relate this incident many times and also read it for it has been published as well. Anyhow, let us continue:

Sitting on the káfir's chest, his sword drawn, Hadhrat Alí رضی الله تعالی عنه was ready to execute the káfir. At that crucial moment the káfir spat into his face. Hadhrat Alí رضی الله تعالی عنه immediately got off his chest.

Take into account that the person was a káfir, an enemy attacking him, and one who was overpowered and defenceless. He still had the gall to insult Hadhrat Alí رضی الله تعالی عنه by spitting into his face! Was this not denigratory?

The status of Hadhrat Alí رضی الله تعالی عنه should also be considered: he came from a very noble family, one whose ímán was of the highest order, one who had an honoured position among the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم and closeness to Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم; one who had been given the glad tidings of Jannat. Truly, he was of a very elevated status.

Those who are truly elevated, who are considered to be important, have the highest degree of 'abdiyet; they have the highest degree of humility, even though they may be wearing clothes of royalty. Mulláh Jámíرحمة الله علیه was a great 'álim. You may have studied his kitáb "Shareh Jámí," which is prescribed in the dárul-'ulúm.

The importance of turning to a sheikh

Before proceeding, let me mention something else: Towards the end, some 'ulemá develop some perception with regard to tazkíyah. When this realisation comes, they do not ignore it, but place their full attention and concentration on it. I have seen this with my own eyes. Mauláná Rasúl Khán Sáhib was a very amazing and accomplished mudarris at the dárul-'ulúm, excelling in Philosophy and Logic. I studied the kitáb "Qází" under him.

A qissah: Mauláná Khairábádí Sáhib answering a student

Once, a person from Khairábád attended his class whilst he was teaching the kitáb "Qází". We had mentioned previously Mauláná Khairábádí Sáhib, who considered himself unique in the field of Logic and Philosophy. Well, this student was from the same place. He had come to visit another student here. Seeing that the lesson was still on, he went to sit among the students

of the class. Mauláná Rasúl Khán Sáhib did not notice his arrival or his presence. He had the habit of looking down and not looking right or left while he gave his lesson. He used to lean his back against the wall and give his lesson in this manner.

When the lesson came to an end, the Khairábádí student raised a criticism of a particular point. Mauláná Rasúl Khán Sáhib gave his reply. On this, the Khairábádí student raised another criticism. Mauláná Rasúl Khán Sáhib replied to this. Again, the Khairábádí student raised another objection on this reply.

O students, are you listening? An ustád will recognise the quality of his students and tailor his talks at their level. He explains the subjects of the kitábs accordingly. They sit in front of him daily and he comes to recognise their potentials. However, here was a student who appeared to be stubborn and mad, raising one needless objection after another.

So, Mauláná Rasúl Khán Sáhib, in reply to the objection, then delivered a power-packed lecture, giving proofs, references and detailed explanations. At the end of this powerful exposition, he kept silent. There was now no more room for any objections or criticisms and none came forth!

Mauláná Rasúl Khán Sáhib had the habit of using three phrases and these were: "Himár (donkey); buze-akhfash (dunce) and kamarband ho-gyá dilá (i.e. has the steam being knocked out of you?)" These remarks were made in affection, according to the quality of the student concerned. However, on this occasion he did not know that there was a visitor present, but when he saw that there were no further objections being raised, addressing the questioner, he said: "Himár! Buze-akhfash! Kamarband ho-gyá dilá? Why do you not speak now?" The questioner was silenced.

Do you see? Our 'ulemá were not in any way inferior to the Khairábádís. Our akábir 'ulemá were a match for the Khairábádís, who were boastful of their knowledge of Philosophy and Logic.

Coming to the point I wish to make, that towards the latter period of his life, Mauláná Rasúl Khán Sáhib also turned towards Tasawwuf and Sulúk. He established an isláhí contact with Hadhratwálá and was given khiláfat – majáze-bai'at – as well. Another such person was Mauláná Abdur-Rahmán Sáhib Kemalpúrí of Mazáharul-Ulúm, highly qualified in Philosophy and

Logic, Hadíth and Fiqh. He also developed this realisation towards the end and became bai'at to Hadhratwálá. He also became majáze-bai'at. These individuals developed the realisation of the importance of Tasawwuf and Sulúk towards the latter part of their lives.

A qissah of Mulláh Jámí looking for a sheikh

We were going to speak about Mulláh Jámí before we digressed. His qissah came to mind when I spoke about royalty. He had also developed this yearning to tread the Path of Sulúk. He went to go and meet a buzurg.

Now, remember that 'abdiyet is an inner state. What we had mentioned with regard to the reality of humility and the difference between istigná and istikbár.

The akábir of the Naqshbandí silsilah in the past used to live with much pomp and glory. The Chistiyah did not adopt this method. Although we are connected to all the four silsilas, the Chistiyah silsilah is predominant

Before Mulláh Jámí could enter to meet the buzurg, he saw that there was a doorman at the entrance. He had to obtain permission from the doorman in order to enter. Having obtained this permission, Mulláh Jámí went forward and shifted the curtain in the doorway. As he lifted the curtain his gaze fell on the furnishings inside: luxurious carpets were on the floor, large, soft pillows against the wall, with the buzurg sitting with the pomp of royalty. On seeing all this luxury, Mulláh Jámí recited a line of poetry:

The Ahlulláh, those who are wásil-bil-Haqq, cannot be infatuated by the dunyá.

Having recited this, he left and went to stay at the masjid.

At night he had a dream in which some person from the rijále-ghaib came to him. Mulláh Jámí asked him: "I want to travel the road to Alláh Ta'álá. Could you show me the way?" This person answered: "You had the road but you left it." Mulláh Jámí's eyes opened. He was now very perplexed. What to do now?

He dosed off again and saw another dream: It was the Day of Hashr and accounts were being taken. Mulláh Jámí saw himself there as well. Some people came to him, demanding money owed to them by Mulláh Jámí. He was greatly agitated, as he had no money with him. He saw a sedan-

chair coming with somebody sitting in it. There was an attendant with this person. The sedan-chair was placed on the ground and the attendant came to Mulláh Jámí with the good news that the sheikh had offered to settle his debts from the money that the sheikh had kept there. The money was handed over and the debts settled. Mulláh Jámí was left off the hook. Curious to know who the generous person was, Mulláh Jámí approached the sedan-chair. Much to his surprise he recognised the person as the same buzurg that he had gone to that day! His eyes opened. He was now more perplexed than ever!

The night passed and it was the time of dawn. At the time of Fajr he saw the sheikh enter the masjid for salát. The opportunity to ask his forgiveness had presented itself. He rushed forward, but as he was about to fall at the sheikh's feet, the sheikh stopped him. "No. No. It is not necessary. However, that line that you read – yesterday you recited for your own pleasure. Today, my desire is that you recite it again, but for my pleasure." Mulláh Jámí said: "It was my error, my fault. I ask to be forgiven." The sheikh said: "I am quite serious: yesterday you recited for your own happiness; today recite it to make me happy." Mulláh Jámí recited the same line again:

The Ahlulláh, those who are wásil-bil-Haqq, cannot be infatuated by the dunyá.

The sheikh immediately added his own line to it:

If one who is a real, haqíqí Mehbúb of Alláh Ta'álá, keeps dunyá as a friend, he does it for the sake of a friend.

The one line of poetry became a couplet. The friend had asked and he had a right over one, so as per the order of Alláh Ta'álá, it was used for the friend. It was not used for oneself, not for elevating one's prestige, not for promoting one's status and grandeur, not for the sake of hubbe-jáh, not for the sake of hubbe-mál. Only for hubbe-Iláhí.

As I had said, towards the end many come to realise the importance of Sulúk. So was it with Mulláh Jámí. He also became aware of the need of having a sheikh. He became bai'at to the buzurg.

The responsibilities of a sheikh

Remember that istigná is one thing and istikbár is another. To differentiate

between the two is not within the capabilities of everyone. The muslih – that person whom you refer to as the sheikh – will discuss various topics in a majlis. The qualities of the tálib will determine the degree of 'ilm that he will attain and the degree of perception that he will develop. Just as the muslih will convey correct practice, so will he convey correct Díní ta'lím.

Now, take this letter that I have received, and have kept in front of you. The sender has written: "This is my name. I am a student at a dárul-'ulúm, studying such and such specialist kitábs." Where he has written "dárul-'ulúm," I have drawn a line and written: "dárul-'ulúm is a general term. Nowadays, the madrasah is called a dárul-'ulúm, but this is a general term applicable to all such institutes. Why did you not add a specific name to it, so that one may recognise which dárul-'ulúm you are attending?" This has been done to correct his statement. A dárul-'ulúm is a general, generic term for such institutions and not specific to a particular one.

You would have studied Logic, in which these issues are explained. For example: man is an animal, falling into the category (genus) common for all animals. The sub-group (species) that he falls under is that of "nátiq" (one who speaks). Until this sub-group is not mentioned, he will be considered to be just a part of the animal kingdom.

So, this student wrote "dárul-'ulúm," but he did not mention the sub-group, the specific institution. I am aware that, generally, when we refer to "dárul-'ulúm" over here, we are referring to the dárul-'ulúm in Deoband. However, what has happened now recently? Now there are two dárul-'ulúms in Deoband, one being the "Qadím" (Old) and the other being the "Jadíd" (New). The latter is attached to the Jáme Masjid, which is waqf, the other being ghair-waqf. I am not sure what term is used to describe it. So, which dárul-'ulúm is he studying at – the Qadím or the Jadíd? I also realised that he was most probably referring to the dárul-'ulúm Qadím. However, he was being corrected on this issue: a line was drawn at that point and the question posed as to why did he not specify the dárul-'ulúm. How am I to know which dárul-'ulúm he was at if he did not specify as much?

So, that person who is a sheikh will correct the statements of his muríds, just as he corrects their actions. Why did he write in those terms? Why did he speak in that manner? Also, why did he sit in that manner? Sitting

here, why is he looking elsewhere? Is this correct talab – is this a sign of questing?

The sheikh relates incidences and anecdotes as well – the context and effects of these are also related, in order that the tálibán may develop discernment and a deep understanding of Dín, with its detailed ramifications and differences of opinions.

Every hirs is not harám. Every tama' is not harám. Every takabbur is not harám. Every istigná is not permissible. One should be able to discern the correct viewpoint in differences of opinion. This is not easy and simple – it is not an insignificant quality. One needs to have lengthy sohbat to develop this. One needs to listen with great attention and thoughtfulness.

It is a well-known practice coming down from the mashá'ikh, that there is not just a single specific topic discussed in a majlis, as in a lecture, but the topics discussed are general, varied and many. These are presented with authentic narrations and rational proofs.

I had said something earlier on, before the majlis had commenced: The lights were switched on. There was enough light. The doors were then opened and more light came in – the intensity of the light increased. What did I then say? I said: "Put the lights off." Was this non-beneficial speech? What amazing people, what amazing friendship, what an amazing demonstration of faith and confidence, that this statement of mine is considered to be frivolous, to be lá-yání, to be laghú to be useless!

Explaining laghú – absurd/nonsensical

The meaning of the word "laghú" is "absurd/ nonsensical".

This word is used in the Qur'án Sharíf. See in the twenty-fifth surah. Mentioning several of the noble qualities of the believers, Alláh Ta'álá goes on to state that one of the qualities of the mu'min is that:

وَالَّذِيْنَ لَا يَشْهَدُوْنَ الزُّورَ ۙ

And those who do not participate in false activities. (S.25.72.)

The translation of this áyet is that the shán – the nobility and dignified status – of the believers is that they do not sit where nonsensical activities are taking place. The word that is used is *"lá-yash-hadúna"* – "they do not

witness". The word *"lá-yasma-úna"* – "they do not listen" – is not used. The Word of Alláh Ta'álá is pure and full of depth and inner meaning. Scholarly linguists have thrown down their arms in the face of it.

To continue: It is also not stated: *"lá-yaj-lisúna"* – "they do not sit" – but it is said: *"lá yash-hadúna"* – "they do not witness". Also, the word "laghú" is not used, but the word "zúr" – "lies/ falsehood" – is used. It is not in the shán of a mu'min is that he should sit in stupid and unintelligent gatherings. The meaning then would be that those gatherings where the conversation is non-beneficial, useless and inappropriate and where there is no dafa'mazarrat (warding off harm), a gathering where those present speak about irrelevant matters, are avoided by the mu'min.

Another way of putting it is thus: He does not give an opportunity to others to witness his stupidity by his actions. If he were to sit in such gatherings, his action would be proof of his stupidity and being unintelligent! Those with knowledge have clearly understood that, by his action and by his speech, he is giving a clear indication of his idiocy, his stupidity. Those with knowledge have understood very well!

Do you understand?

Ímán also has some rank and status and those with ímán – the mu'minín – will also enjoy some rank and status. So, that person who has this rank and status should live up to that position, not shift away from it. So, we should assess ourselves: being mu'min and also of the ahle-'ilm, have we shifted away from that rank or not?

Alláh Ta'álá is saying it: By your actions and your speech, why are you giving proof of your idiocy and stupidity? Are you not ashamed? Have you no sense of shame? Have you no modesty in you? Why are you sitting in such venues? Why are you sitting amongst such people? Why are you involved in such activities? And, mind you, you being of the ahle-'ilm! Why are you involved in the sports of the English, being students of wahí?

It is Alláh Ta'álá who is stating that this is not in keeping with the shán of the mu'min. And what if that mu'min is an 'álim and what if that 'álim, in addition, is a tálib in Sulúk? Has the rank and status not increased? It has! That is why Alláh Ta'álá has stated further on: Never mind not sitting there, never mind not providing proof of one being an idiot and

being stupid, when his route unavoidably passes by them and he passes by incidentally by such stupid people, his shán is such that he pays no attention to them and he passes by with the greatest of dignity, in such a way that there is not the slightest thought of his own greatness or pride or arrogance; and there is absolutely no contempt for those involved in those nonsensical activities.

وَإِذَا مَرُّوْا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوْا كِرَامًا ۝

When they pass by idle pursuits they pass by with dignity. (S.25.72)

This is a continuation of the áyet quoted above: Never mind sitting with such people, If and when he has to pass by them, he does so with head bent, with the utmost humility, with utmost dignity and serenity. There is no pride in him. Also, his behaviour is such that it is apparent that there is no arrogance in his temperament and there is no contempt for others. In other words, there is no istikbár in him, but, in contrast, there is istigná.

Do you understand? Have you understood the examples?

The Qur'án Sharíf states that such people have istigná in them. There is no istikbár in them. "Marrú kirámá" indicates that they have no istikbár in them, but they have istigná towards such activities. As stated previously: It is not in the capabilities of everyone to differentiate between istikbár and istigná. To recognise and utilise light and darkness in the correct manner is not within the capabilities of everyone. This topic had commenced when this bandah had said that the lights should be switched off.

Where this topic has been elucidated, with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of Hadhratwálá, from here another issue becomes apparent. This has entered my mind just at this moment. It concerns adl, (justice) i'tidál (equilibrium) and staying within the hudúd (Sharí'ah limits).

Isráf – wastefulness/extravagance

Utilise only as much light as is necessary for that task to be done correctly. If much greater light is used then this will be isráf. Yes, if the task cannot be performed without it, then make use of a bigger globe or additional lights. I do not know much about these newer and fancier lights on the market. However, if that task is being performed satisfactorily, then what

is the need for attaching additional and expensive lighting? This is now wasteful spending – fuzúl kharchí and isráf. The person has moved away from adl. Being a Sáhibe-wahí, a Sáhibe-'ilm, he still is not aware of what constitutes isráf.

A Qissah: Isráf related to lighting

I cannot remember at this time whether this incident pertains to Hadhrat Umar رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ or to Hadhrat Alí رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ but it was a sahábí, with regard to whom Rasúlulláh صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم has stated:

اَصْحَابِیْ كَاالنُّجُوْمِ بِاَيِّهِمْ اِقْتَدَيْتُمْ اِهْتَدَيْتُمْ

All my sahábah رضی اللہ تعالی عنھم are like stars. Whomsoever you follow from among them, you will be rightly guided.

There was a lamp burning at the sahábí's home. The lamps used mustard oil (or something similar) to produce light. Another sahábí رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ said: "If the flame was bigger, there would have been more light." The sahábí رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ it was either Hadhrat Umar رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ or Hadhrat Alí رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ replied: "If this light is sufficient for the work to be carried out satisfactorily, what need is there for a brighter light? More oil will be used. Will this then not be isráf?"

This is narrated proof (dalíle-naqlí) of my statements.

The importance of being able to differentiate between roshní and indherá, núr and zulmat and the use of everything on every occasion with adl and i'tidál, has been set before you. Incidentally, these topics came to my lips after what happened earlier on and the topic of roshní and indherá carried on into different avenues. The crux and essence of this topic is that one should save oneself from futile activities, from the aspects of actions as well as speech. This has been proven from the Qur'án Sharíf:

وَالَّذِيْنَ لَا يَشْهَدُوْنَ الزُّورَ ۙ وَإِذَا مَرُّوْا بِاللَّغْوِ مَرُّوْا كِرَامًا ۝

And those who do not participate in false activities. When they pass by idle pursuits they pass by with dignity. (S.25.72)

It is stated not only here, but at other places as well,

وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُوْنَ

And who avoid worthless conversation. (S.23.3.)

The shán of a mu'min is that he abstains from useless and vain actions and speech – he avoids these activities, he bypasses them; he sidesteps them.

وَإِذَا سَمِعُوا اللَّغْوَ أَعْرَضُوْا عَنْهُ

And when they hear vain talk they withdraw from it (S.28.55.)

When he hears any person speaking non-beneficially to him and he realises that it is fruitless and useless, he brushes it aside. Whether the "laghú" is directly at him, that such and such a person has said this about you; or it comes to his ears indirectly, he brushes it aside. This is the shán of the mu'min that has been described in the Qur'án Sharíf in different places. So, if that person is one of the ahle-'ilm and also a sáhibe-tazkíyah, then, to a proportionately higher degree, should these qualities be in him!

Different methods to stop the carrying of tales

That is why it was the method of our Hadhratwálá and other akábir, Hadhrat Gangohí رحمة الله عليه Hadhrat Hají Imdádulláhرحمة الله عليه and others that, when somebody came to them and said: "Such and such a person had this to say about you then their response was: "That person may have said it or not, but you are throwing it directly into my face!" After such a rebuke, this person would not have the courage to carry tales again in the future.

However, people like us respond in a different manner from that of our akábir. We would gleefully ask: "Yes, yes, what more did he have to say? Come, speak openly! Why are you hesitating?"

Interest has been aroused, is that not so? We do not know what gossip he will come to relate in the future. He will make up stories. He has found an ear to whisper into. His interest has been aroused. He has lent an ear to his gossip. The fountains for quarrels and fights have been opened. The in-fighting among relatives has now commenced.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was going somewhere. Passing a qabrastán, he stopped and ordered for two green twigs to be brought to him. He placed one on one of the graves and the other on a second grave. The sahábah رضى

رضی الله تعالى عنهم enquired: “O Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم, what is this?” Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم replied: “The inmate of the one grave was one who did not protect himself from drops of urine falling on him. And the inmate of the second grave was one who did not save himself from carrying tales. Both were being punished. I have placed these green twigs on their graves so that, because of the tasbíh made by the twigs, their punishment would be lightened.” Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم was sent as a mercy to both the worlds.

Carrying tales is another manifestation of laghú. Laghú has many branches to it. The evil of the tongue is not only to tell lies. The tongue is involved in many evils. Imám Ghazálí رضی الله تعالى عنه has written down some twenty evils of the tongue.

In tazkíyah of the nafs it is very necessary to save oneself from laghú and láyání. If one does not save oneself from these how will one save oneself from those aspects which are obviously useless and forbidden? This is the meaning of tazkíyah of the nafs that one will also protect oneself from those actions which may be permissible in themselves, but which may lead one to what is prohibited. So, protect yourself even from that category of permissible act.

That is why all the tálibín, but especially the one who is a mubtadí, should not involve themselves in issues pertaining to já’iz and ná-já’iz. The tálib should not insist on a certain matter and say: “But this is já’iz!”

Is my voice reaching you?

Those who are staying in the khánqáh should not talk to others, should not socialise with others, and should not stare at others. This person may not be looking at the other person with evil intent (bid-nigáh) and may be looking at the other person with muhabbat and with i’tiqád. Nobody is stopping you. However, the person stared at feels it a burden on his heart. It may be that some people’s constitutions are weak.

A qissah: Hadhrat Mauláná Ilyás Sáhib in Thánah Bhawan

Hadhrat Mauláná Ilyás Sáhib, the founder of the Tablígh Movement, came to the khánqáh in Thánah Bhawan. Hadhratwálá used to perform the five times salát in the masjid. After performing the Asr namáz, Hadhratwálá came to stand in the courtyard near the covered area. It was summer

time. Hadhratwálá had two servants, one for the big house and one for the small house. The servant from the big house was standing as he had some necessary work. Hadhratwálá became aware of Hadhrat Mauláná Ilyás Sáhib standing at the middle door of the masjid and staring at him. Thinking it to be just incidental, Hadhratwálá did not say anything. However, Hadhrat Mauláná Ilyás Sáhib kept on standing there and staring at Hadhratwálá. Hadhratwálá told the servant: "Just see who that Sáhib is." Hadhratwálá had a very investigative temperament and used to enquire into every occurrence.

Nowadays, whatever another says, one accepts and one is convinced of its truthfulness. There is no inclination to investigate personally. However, it is very necessary for a person in a position of responsibility to investigate a situation. It is not sufficient to rely merely on hearsay. How can one act on something one merely heard from somebody?

So, the servant went to enquire and reported back: "It is Mauláná Ilyás Sáhib." Hadhratwálá said: "Ofo! Being one of us, he does such a thing? Go to him and tell him: 'The muhabbat you have is in its place. I am aware of it. However, what can I do? My constitution is a bit weak. Whenever somebody stares continuously at me, there is a danger of drops of urine leaking out.' Go and tell him that."

Hadhratwálá took into consideration the status of Hadhrat Mauláná Ilyás Sáhib. It was not a situation where "everyone is driven with the same whip". Recognise the individual. We are speaking about roshní and indherá – light and darkness. The branches and masá'il are being enunciated and the method of its application. Recognise the person and the situation.

The message was delivered and Hadhrat Mauláná Ilyás Sáhib moved away from there. Yes, Hadhratwálá had reprimanded him, but the reprimand had taken into account the status of the individual being addressed.

Khwájah Sáhib used to sit in the area where the students had their classes, leaning against a pillar. When Hadhratwálá used to come he was able to look at Hadhratwálá, but in such a way that Hadhratwálá was not aware that he was being stared at. He knew very well that if Hadhratwálá were to know of his looking at him from there he would be taken to task in a severe manner! Others would also look at Hadhratwálá but they would sit

in such a hidden manner that they were not noticed by Hadhratwálá as to be watching him.

Have the different types of “laghú” being explained? It is fardh to save oneself from laghú. So, if one goes to sit at those places where people are involved in this laghú, one is giving evidence of one’s own un-intelligence and idiocy. This is the meaning of laghú. If you have come there for some specific work, having done the work you have come for, move on. Why are you still sitting around there? Why are you still being reluctant to move away? Why are there additional conversations of worldly matters taking place? Have you nothing else to do that you have time for this? It appears that you are useless person, sitting idle. It is a heavy burden on us, seeing that you are one of our people. One feels pained at seeing one of our own in this condition.

Some rules for staying in the khánqáh

So, staying in the khánqáh, should one abstain from laghú, or – Taubah! Taubah! Taubah! – should one involve oneself in all the different categories of laghú? Therefore, observe two rules: silence (sukút) and tranquillity (sukún). All types of people are here. It may happen that another person may be an acquaintance from before – the person may be hailing from the same locality, the same city or the same country – but, after arriving here one has to stay in such a manner as if to say: “I am alone here and I know nobody. I have absolutely no acquaintances here.” One has to have a grip on one’s temperament, burden oneself and stay in such a manner that firmness comes into one. One should reach a stage of nafse-mutma’innah. One has come for that purpose to develop nisbate-haqíqí, a special bond with Záte-Bárí Ta’álá.

Have you come here to change your old habits or remain steadfast on them? Of course, to change them. Now, this change, is it a change for the better or a change for the worse? Obviously, it is for a change for the better that you have attached yourself to the khánqáh. So, the heart has to undergo continuous change for the better until the heart embraces seclusion. The characteristics of the nafs have been cleansed of the akhláqe-razílah and the heart has been emblazoned with akhláqe-hamídah in a

permanent manner. Have you understood what I am saying? The nafs has evil in it. This needs to be replaced with good. If not, what is the benefit of coming here? Why come? Go back home.

Bear in mind that this is the month of Ramadhán, the month of, ر Rahmat; م Maghfirat; ض Dhiyáfat; ا Ulfat; and ن Ne'mat.

Seeing that you have come here and are staying here, with the utmost humility and muhabbat, with the responsibility that is placed on me and with responsibility with which you have come here, I urge upon you not to mix with one another, not to socialise with one another, not to go into one another's rooms. Yes, if there is a dire necessity, then there is no restriction. If there is no necessity, what would be the reason then be? In necessary matters, discarding what is necessary, will lead to harm. In unnecessary matters it, adopting what is not necessary, would result in bringing harm. You have come here to save yourself from harm, to save yourself from evil, to discipline your temperament.

You have come to mold your temperament to khair. The ímán of a mu'min desires aman (peace and order), not bid-amaní (anarchy). The Islám of a Muslim desires salámatí (tranquillity), not shar (evil). That is why a mu'min, a Muslim, should develop his lifestyle in this manner and live among Muslims non-Muslims in this manner. Husne-akhláq should be portrayed with everybody.

Which brings me back to what I had said previously with regard to adl and bé-adl: If anybody confronts us with injustice, justice should not slip from our hands. Good character should be displayed with everybody. This is one branch of nafse-mutma'innah. The nafs has three conditions: nafse-ammárah, nafse-lowwámah and nafse-mutma'innah. The characteristics of each are different. Each one is recognised by the effects each one manifests. You have come her to discard nafse-ammárah, to proceed to nafse-lowwámah and discard it as well and progress to nafse-mutma'innah. This cannot happen until the first and foremost condition is not adhered to, that is, not to socialise.

The first principle in Sulúk is to assess whether the sheikh with whom one wishes to attach oneself, is a sheikh or not. The sheikh should have knowledge of the ills of the nafs; he should have knowledge of the remedies

for treating these ills; he should have knowledge of the different methods of treatment; he should have knowledge of and the differentiation of socialising and its ramifications. You also have to know who his sheikh was and whether he has stayed in the company of his sheikh.

When you have found such a sheikh and you have i'tiqád and i'timád in him, then you hand yourself over into his custody like one would hand over one's clothes to a laundryman. Then, every word that issues from his lips is listened to with proper i'tiqád and i'timád. These words are then to be embedded in the heart. Remember: Your sheikh will not be with you in your daily life, but his teachings will be will you.

So, the manner in which you spend your time in the khánqáh, in the same manner must you spend your time at home. That will be the way you spend your time, with husne-akhláq, not only at home, but in the wilderness, at your work, in the bazaars, in the streets and concourses, amongst your own, amongst strangers and even with your enemies! This is the steadfastness, firmness and perfection that have to be developed. This is what is termed nafse-mutma'innah.

The discussion was on roshní and indherá – light and darkness. Roshní is necessary. One has to behave with equilibrium (i'tidál) – with adl, not with bé-adlí. The essence of this is that if anybody confronts one with bé-adlí, adl should not slip from our hands.

Du'á

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us taufíq arzání

آمِيْن يَا رَبَّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ وَصَلَّى اللهُ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَامُحَمّدٍ وَاٰلِهٖ وَسَلَّمَ

فِيْ اَمَانَاللهِ

Khudá Háfiz.

BOOKLET NUMBER EIGHTEEN
Rajab 1427 – August 2006

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh, once again, solely through the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh رحمة الله عليه – also, not forgetting the valued du'ás of our readers – this eighteenth discourse is ready.

A doctor friend was puzzled with regard to a statement made by our Sheikh رحمة الله عليه to a sálik, who had related that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه had said: "See to your own isláh and do not concern yourself with others." With the problems that the Muslims are facing nowadays, the doctor wanted to know what is one to make of this advice?

On face value, it appears that the advice appears to inculcate a selfish and self-centred attitude. However, the explanation is quite simple. Using the hospital setup as an example, we recognise that advice given to different individuals will be suitable for that particular individual: The patient admitted for a serious illness, will be told to worry about himself and not others in the ward. On the other hand, the junior houseman will be told to worry only about those few patients entrusted into his care and not about the other patients. Higher up, the registrar will be told to see to all the patients allocated to him and not to those entrusted to the other registrars. The consultant, with greater responsibility, will be told to see to the welfare of all the patients in the ward. The head of the unit will be told to see to all the patients in all the wards in his unit.

In a similar manner, the sheikh will advise the sálik according to his status. It does not mean that the sálik does not have to worry about others – enjoining right and forbidding wrong is also part of Dín – but it means that he will only be able to fulfil the rights of others if his isláh is made, otherwise these rights will be fulfilled in an imperfect or incomplete manner. It can be seen that only if every individual performs the tasks entrusted to him or her in the correct manner, will society be able to function properly. When this individual is faced with the situation of fulfilling the rights

that others have on him, he or she will be able to do this in the way that the Sharí'ah wants. This person will have the necessary qualities to tackle whatever challenges come before him or her.

If the patient in the ward is restored to health, he or she can go back into society and carry on with the duties he or she has. For the patient to be able to do this, the patient has to concentrate on regaining his or her own full health first. If each patient, instead of seeing to himself, goes about the ward trying to help the other patients, one can see that there will be complete chaos! Alláh Ta'álá states:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ عَلَيۡكُمۡ أَنفُسَكُمۡۖ لَا يَضُرُّكُم مَّن ضَلَّ إِذَا ٱهۡتَدَيۡتُمۡۚ

O you who believe! You have charge of your own souls. He who has gone astray cannot injure you if you are rightly guided. (S.5.105.)

This topic was discussed in some detail in Booklet Number Thirteen by our Sheikh رحمة الله عليه under the sub-heading of "Aman and Bid-amaní". To quote a few lines:

"Bid-amaní – anarchy and chaos – is spread throughout the world. The reason is that bid-amaní is rampant within you. Let me repeat: This bid-amaní, this chaos and anarchy, is widespread throughout the world and this is the external manifestation of the chaos and anarchy that is rampant within you. When this bid-amaní disappears from within all of you, then bid-amaní will also disappear from the world..."

From this brief explanation, it is hoped that the reader will be able to have a better perspective when reading these majális. The reader will also be able to pick up the fact that the topics discussed are such that the advices contained in them will apply not only to an individual in one category, but to different individuals at their levels. The discerning reader will note that the advices will be such that the beginner – the mubtadí – will gain something, as well as the accomplished – the muntahí.

It will also become clear that direct contact with one's sheikh is absolutely essential. Constant communications with him and following his prescription will save the sálik from many errors that he may fall into by merely reading a discourse or listening to one.

One should not conclude that the sheikh is not concerned about the problems facing the ummat – he is more concerned than any of us could be, just like the head of the unit in a hospital will be concerned about all patients, the health of the community from whence the patients come and the national and international health implications of the diseases that he comes across. He realises that the health of the community is dependent on the health of the individual and that individual is lying in the bed in the ward. Similarly, the sheikh-e-kámil bears in mind the whole ummat, present and future and his concern is also for the whole ummat.

May Alláh Ta'álá give us all deep understanding and the taufíq to follow the teachings of our Sheikh رحمة الله عليه.

Dr.I.M.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[This majlis was conducted by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه *on the 8th Shawwál 1412, corresponding with the 13th April 1992, in Jalálábád, India. It should be borne in mind that Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib* رحمة الله عليه *passed away a few months thereafter, in November 1992.]*

ENSLAVEMENT – GHULÁMÍ & 'ABDIYET

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحْمَدَهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

[Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه *initially commented on his state of health.]*

I am coughing greatly. At times, the coughing spells last a long time. No phlegm is expectorated. Only if I cough very hard, will the phlegm come out. Thereafter, I feel a little bit at ease. However, the body becomes virtually

lifeless and it seems that even my life becomes lifeless for a little while. My stomach and its contents pain because of the great amount of coughing and I have to manoeuvre myself into a more comfortable position.

There is no limit to my weakness. You may assess yourself: Four of the namáz I perform here. For the Ishá namáz I am unable to go to the masjid. I go in the morning (for the Fajr namáz). I feel the desire to go. Two people hold me and take me and two people hold me and bring me back.

Come nearer.

[There was a very lengthy pause. Hadhrat then continued.]

What shall I say? You have heard much and much is being spoken. What shall I say? You honoured people know a lot. Who, from amongst you honoured people, is not from the ahle-'ilm? Everybody understands the simple, straightforward topics.

The núr of ímán

Alláh Ta'álá has rendered ímán as núr and He has also rendered Himself, by way of illustration, as Núr:

اَللّٰهُ نُورُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ؕ

Alláh is the light of the heavens and the earth (S.24.35.)

This is stated allegorically in order to make people, the creation, understand.

So, on the other hand, ímán has been rendered as núr:

اَللّٰهُ وَلِيُّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ۙ يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِّنَ الظُّلُمٰتِ إِلَى النُّوْرِ ؕ

Alláh is the Friend of the believers. He delivers them from out of darkness into light. (S.2.257.)

And, in the same áyet, kufr has been said to be darkness:

وَالَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْٓا أَوْلِيٰٓؤُهُمُ الطَّاغُوْتُ ۙ يُخْرِجُوْنَهُمْ مِّنَ النُّوْرِ إِلَى الظُّلُمٰتِ ؕ

They (the false deities/ Shayátín) take those (who disbelieve) out of light into darkness. (S.2.257.)

Also, in the 'Álame-mítháq, Alláh Ta'álá had asked:

أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ ۖ

Am I not your Rabb? (S.7.172.)

Alláh Ta'álá did not say: "A-lastu bi-Iláhikum? – Am I not your Deity?"

The difference between Iláh and Rabb is as follows:

Iláh refers to: One who is worshiped. Rabb refers to: Master/ Lord: that Being who possesses in His control the agencies, resources and means for the complete process of nurturing and rearing. He would be called the Master.

Those who were addressed thus, how did they respond? They replied: "*Qálú, balá.*" – "They said: 'Truly, we accept'." In other words, they submitted and accepted. Once, having accepted, it is now necessary to uphold that commitment.

When Alláh Ta'álá had placed this burdensome trust before the heavens and the earth and the mountains, they all refused to accept it. You could also have refused to accept it. But, since you have admitted and have accepted Him as your Rabb – and the meaning of Rabb being One who is a complete Master/Owner – then the person who has accepted this trust now becomes a complete slave. Is that not so?

Think! Ponder! Meditate with a deep insight. Have not the entire creation become slaves in the 'Álame-míthág?

Seeing that the whole of mankind had accepted the status of slavery, implying: "You [O Rabb] are our complete and absolute Master and we are your complete and absolute slaves," we now have to consider what tasks has the slave to carry out? Is it under "freedom" or "restrainment"? Obviously a slave has no freedom and is all the time constrained to carry out the orders of the master.

So, when one has accepted that one is a slave – when one has verbally acknowledged oneself to be a slave, saying: "Whatever You tell me I will carry out; whatever You instruct, I will execute" – one has taken on this responsibility and this is now a promise. Should now one break one's promise or should one fulfil one's promise? It is obvious that, after committing oneself, one should fulfil one's promise.

The qualities of a khalífah

Now we should ponder on this. It is for this reason that Alláh Ta'álá has sent His Messenger – His Deputy – to this world to remind us of what happened in the 'Álame-mítháq. And this reminder was a continuous process, from the time of Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام right through to Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم and also through to those who are deputies in the true sense of the word. "Khalífah" means "a deputy (ná'ib)".

At the outset, the person who is the khalífah should possess those qualities which are possessed by the one whose khalífah he is. Further, he should then possess those qualities that will enable him to guide others. In other words, he should firstly be "ráh-bín" and secondly: "ráh-bar" – he should possess these two honourable qualities: be one who travels along the path initially and then be one to show others the path. Then only will he be termed a khalífah.

Difference between the duties of a slave and an employee

So, having made a pledge, this person is now a slave. This means that the person states: "Whatever You instruct, I will carry out." This is inherent in the acceptance of the premise stated above. It is also obvious that a slave does not have just one task. Have you understood the sequences of this argument? To repeat: does a slave have only one category of work? No, never! A slave has to carry out whatever task the master commands him to do.

Therefore, it is apparent that insán occupies the position of enslavement, whereas the other creation – that of angels – occupies the position of employment. The angels are not like slaves: whatever specific task is shown to them that they will carry out. It is a special favour and their muhabbat that other tasks are given to them in order to make them happy.

The angels had spoken out: "You have created insán and have stated insán to be khalífah." Because of their spiritual and truthful insight, they commented: "They will do such and such deeds." Alláh Ta'álá said: "Yes, but you do not know what I know. What you are saying is the very basis for making insán a khalífah, for this insán will enforce on himself the execution of My orders."

The comments that the angels had made were not objections or complaints,

but the comments were made "mohabbatan" – out of affection. In other words, they were presenting themselves for additional tasks. Alláh Ta'álá said: "You will not be able to carry out these tasks."

So, the angels are created in the position of employees. Some are placed in charge of rains, others over the winds, others on cultivated land, others over mountains, others are porters of the Arsh, others are made scribes and so forth and so forth.

But insán is not an employee. Insán is a slave. And a slave has not just one specified task to perform: Whatever the branches that pertain to his life, whatever the tasks related to these branches, all these tasks are now his responsibility. "Alastu-bi-rabbikum" did not entail merely bringing ímán. Having said: "Balá!" one is now stating one's acceptance and, having accepted, one has accepted Divinity as well, implying: "Whatever You instruct that I will carry out, as I am merely a slave." One's external 'ibádat is manifestation of this Divinity. All these implications are included. Is that not so?

The true meaning of 'ibádat

Now, whatever task that is performed according to the orders of Bárí Ta'álá will be in the confines of 'ibádat. In essence, this insán mu'min who came with ímán from the 'Álame-míthＡq, now, whatever he is ordered to do and he does so, walking under the canopy of these orders, he will be involved in 'ibádat during that period and not "worldly" activity. Since he is involved in tasks of 'ibádat, then it is apparent that the whole and complete life of a mu'min, even when it pertains to a mundane thing like sleeping, falls in the category of 'ibádat. And when he departs even for one second from these orders, he is not in 'ibádat. Do you understand? Having said: "Qálú balá!" one has now brought on difficulties. One has brought these on oneself, for you could have refused when the offer was presented.

Therefore, the mu'min bandah is in 'ibádat all the time, provided that he is doing his work subservient to the orders of Bárí Ta'álá. This work may be in the categories of the cultivation of fields, or trading, or employment, or manufacturing and industry, or it may be business partnerships, or pertaining to the legal profession, or financial institutions, or mutual

transactions, or marriages, or giving birth, or rearing of children; or whether it pertains to dealing with compassion and empathy with others, or in serving the community during the time that it necessitates – all these will fall in the category of ’ibádat. This now forms the criteria, referred to as the laws of the Sharí’ah and not laws of Takwín. The laws of Takwín have been entrusted to the angels (but may, at times, be entrusted to insán as well). However, here we are referring to the laws of the Sharí’ah.

Seeking ’ilm is fardh

Now, it becomes fardh for every mu’min Muslim to learn the laws of the Sharí’ah to the extent of his or her needs; and it becomes fardhe-kifáyah to establish a group of mu’minín that will have an all-comprehensive knowledge of the Sharí’ah. If such a group is not established, then all the mu’minín will have sinned.

This is like the situation of Janázah namáz: If nobody from the local community has read the namáz, then the whole community will have sinned; and if just a few have read the namáz, then the obligation will be deemed to have been fulfilled on behalf of the whole community.

To continue: It is necessary and fardh for a group from amongst the Muslims to be in existence, this group having a full and comprehensive knowledge of the laws of the Sharí’ah and the orders of Alláh Ta’álá. This group will have no other duties. If this group involves itself in any other tasks, this other work will be defective and its original work will also be defective, because how can two tasks be performed simultaneously? This is, thus, distribution of duties.

Two tasks cannot be performed simultaneously

Evidence of this is present in this worldly life in connection with employment in the government sector. Let me relate an incident that happened yesterday:

A person, a Muslim, is for a long time a government employee in the lower echelons of the revenue department. A very good man, a good worker and a very honest man. He relates a most interesting situation concerning himself. He said: “I am requesting a mashwarah from you.” I replied: “What

mashwarah do you want?" He said: "It is not good to stay put in one job, especially these days, where times are very uncertain. So, I wish to study tibb." I replied: "How are you going to study tibb? It requires a lot of time. It also requires gaining entrance to a madrasah. How are you then going to work in the revenue department?" He said: "I have asked some people at the tibb college. They say such books are available which I can study while sitting at home. Whatever problems I come across, I can ask the tutors to solve. I can also write examinations from time to time. I will be able to complete the course in four years." I said: "It is a very good idea. If it can be done in this way, then do it." He also said: "I am getting frustrated with my employment. Such laws are coming into force which our Islám forbids. But I am persevering." I said: "Do not leave until you have found some alternate means of livelihood. This is the saying of our buzurgs. Otherwise you will bring on calamities. Your idea is excellent. Go ahead and study." He said: "That is fine. You have given permission. However, I have to ask the Collector-sahib as well." I asked. "What need is there to ask the Collector-sahib?" He explained: "I am a government employee and a government employee is not allowed to do any other work. If the government employee wishes to do business, he has to do it in the name of his son. He will not be allowed to trade in his own name. Should they discover his ruse, he will be suspended from duties and dismissed."

So you can see the rules of the government: A government employee cannot do any other work in his private capacity. There will be defect in either this work or the other. Do you see the point in this illustration?

In the same manner, the 'álim, who has gained expertise in the laws of the Dín, has to remain with it. It is not correct for him to involve himself in any other work or take up any other work. And this is based on his studies – on the kitábs of law, from Qudúrí till the final Hidáyah, after which comes the all-comprehensive Dorah Sharíf. So this mudarris, if he wishes to attain and maintain his expertise, with dalá'il (proofs) and incontrovertible argument, theoretical and narrative ('aqlí aur naqlí), he has no permission to involve himself in any other work. Why? The reason is that there will either be harm on this side or on the other side. Can a kitáb be learnt without proper thought and contemplation? Of course not. So, that mudarris who really

wants to become like this, will have to follow what has been stated above. And if one does not want to be like that, then he can do as he pleases.

However, it is fardh-e-kifáyah to have a group like this. Do not harass them into doing other work. This is ná-já'iz.

'Ilm and tablígh

By way of example – it is necessary to state this directly – those who go out in jamá'at and request others to go out in jamá'at, to go out for a chillah, will be told: "The work that you are doing, carry on with it. Do it with full concentration. Do it with sidq and ikhlás and within the bounds of the Sharí'ah. Do it with excellence. This requires 'ilm. Without correct knowledge, can a person do tablígh? Never! One does not know what will be said and from where. And there is need for detailed explanations. If these details are not known, the creation will fall into difficulties. The rights of the creation (huqúqul-'ibád) will be discarded. The rights of those connected with one, will be discarded. There will be shortcomings. There will be shortcomings in those commands that are necessary and compulsory with regard to the financial obligations on oneself. There will now be problems because the detailed explanations are not known.

So, carry on with the work that you are doing. However, do not harass those who are involved in the tasks of ta'lím and tadrís. Also, do not harass that tálibul-'ilm who is engrossed in attaining the 'ilm of the laws with clear proofs. Otherwise, you will turn his heart's attention away in a different direction and he will be deprived of this 'ilm. That is why do not harass him. These are laws of the Sharí'ah.

As for that student whose studies are superficial, a student who has enrolled at the madrasah but his heart is not in studying, his situation is different. Being here, he is freed of his household duties. At home, his father would order him to give water to the buffalo, to give it some fodder; to bring back some millet from the field. So, being at the madrasah, he is freed from these duties. Here he receives prepared food, a room that is ready and arrangements for lighting. If he has stated that he is poor, he is even given an allowance. However, his studying is very superficial. He is not suited to become an expert. Never mind becoming expert, he is

not suited to even teach! If he is a hafejí or a molvísáhib, he will get to be an imám somewhere. This is fine. However, he will not be able to teach "Mizáne-Munshab". He will not be able to teach even "Taysarul-Mubtadí," which is considered to be a simple kitáb. It takes a proper 'álim to be able to teach "Taysarul-Mubtadí". A shaky molvísáhib will not be able to teach it. This topic is mentioned merely incidentally.

To continue: It is obvious and it has been proven that by replying: "Balá" to the questioned posed: "Alastu-bi-rabbikum?" one has accepted oneself to be a slave. And a slave does not have one specified duty. Whatever task he is given to do, he carries out. This may be related to 'ibádat in itself, like namáz, rozah, zakát and hajj. Namáz is for everybody, but not zakát. Rozah is for everybody but not hajj.

Zakát is not a duty on all mu'minín. There are some conditions attached: there is the pre-requisite of having wealth. Namáz and rozah are bodily functions. There is no need of wealth. All those who are sane, báligh and healthy, are under obligation. It is necessary to learn the relevant masá'il to the extent of necessity. When a person has some wealth, he has to learn the masá'il regarding zakát, fitrah qurbání, and so forth, to the extent of necessity. When a wife enters the scene, the husband has to learn the laws regarding support and maintenance of the wife. When he has children, he has to learn the laws with regard to their upbringing. Thus, whatever secondary aspects the individual's lifestyle now takes on, so also it will be his responsibility to learn the laws relevant to these secondary aspects.

Protecting Islam requires all-encompassing knowledge

Also, in order to prove the truthfulness of Islám to our antagonists, it is necessary to have full and comprehensive 'ilm, theoretical and narrative. Additionally, it is necessary to present illustrations, with references from the very books of the antagonists, during discussions and debates. For example, it will be said to them, "Whatever Alláh Ta'álá states in the Qur'án Sharíf is nothing new. You check in your Taurah or your Bible or your scriptures. In these you will find that the final messenger who will be sent will be Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم and that it will be necessary to believe in him and it will be necessary to become a Muslim. Whoever does not do so,

will not be entitled to be called a believer." The relevant references will be provided to them, with the comment: "Check it out. It is in your book."

In debates as well, it will be necessary to present the relevant references in their scriptures. On their criticisms of the many wives of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, it will be pointed out to them: "That person whom you consider to be a prophet, whom you call 'Autár' , how many wives did he have? As for our prophet, Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم, who had the strength of a thousand men, you have the audacity to criticise him for having nine wives? You do not have such a mouth that is worthy of criticising our Prophet." This reply has silenced the critic. This is being given to you as an illustration.

What type of 'álim is it who can do this? It is one who has all-encompassing 'ilm. It is not the task of each and everyone to study with such depth. Not everyone holds within him the capabilities for this.

The slave has multiple tasks: acquiring 'ilm of mu'ámulát, tahárat, etc.

To continue: A slave does not have one specified duty. He is not only required to make 'ibádat, but business dealings also form part of his duties. He needs to ask himself: "Do I do business alone or do I do it in partnership with another?" If done in partnership, what are the laws with regard to shirákat and mushárikat, etc.? There are four types of partnerships. One has to acquaint oneself with the relevant laws. Another situation: If one becomes a wakíl, the laws with regard to this should be learnt. Does the kitáb "Hidáyah" not contain chapters on wikálat, on hadhánat, on kifálat, on shahádat , etc.? These are all laws.

Thus, the whole life of a mu'min is that of enslavement. Take another detail: Passing urine is also a task. How should one do this? How should one sit? Where should one sit? If one is in wild terrain and one has the urge to pass urine, where should one sit? How should one sit? How does one prevent droplets of urine splashing on one? Is this not one type of restriction also, or is it freedom? So, we are taught also how to urinate.

When the sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم arrived in the presence of the Christian king, he asked them: "We have heard that your Prophet teaches you how to urinate and defecate?" They replied: "Yes! We were like animals before, not knowing how to urinate and defecate. We were like animals, but now

we have been transformed into human beings. Yes, our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also teaches how to urinate." The sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم held the honour of the laws of Islám in their hearts. They were not ashamed. "Yes, before, we were like animals, urinating and defecating like animals, but we have been taught how to do these as human beings."

The Christian king then asked: "He taught you how to eat as well?" They replied: "Yes! Previously, we ate like animals – eating while standing and while strolling around and also eating indiscriminately. Now we have been taught how to eat like human beings."

This is the lifestyle of enslavement. The sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم were saying that they were taught how to pass urine and pass stools, and that they were taught how to eat and drink. Previously, they did not know how to perform these tasks like human beings, but carried them out like animals.

The Christian king further questioned them: "We have heard that you were also taught how to live with one another?" They replied: "Yes! Previously we were like wolves and carnivorous animals, ready at all times to devour one another. Now, we have been transformed into human beings: we have been told how to live with one another; we have been taught not to cause any grief, neither to ourselves nor to others, whether internal or external, whether it relates to wealth, physical body or inner feelings. Previously, we were not human beings, but we were like wild animals, like wolves and tigers."

Is my voice reaching you? Yes?

The Muslim of today should recognise himself. O mu'min, you had promised to be a slave. To what extent have you fulfilled that promise? In appearance you are a human being, but look at your condition. Are you not a wolf? Are you not a tiger? Are you not an ox, an animal, that you eat in a standing position?

You urinate any old how, sitting as you wish or standing and urinating, so that droplets splash back on you, not being ill either. O mu'min, recognise yourself! What degree of a slave are you? Believing in your Master, by making 'ibádat only, you can never be called a kámil mu'min. You have wandered away from enslavement. It is possible that your activity is like that of an angel, but you have not been sent as an angel. You have been

sent as someone else – that of being a slave, whose duties entail not just one specific task. Judge yourself on this. Otherwise, there were numerous angels present. What need was there for you?

Your need – the manner in which you were created – which you acknowledged, was to be in enslavement. Live in this world in this manner. For the duration of the period that you were not sent forth into this world, you were in the situation of the angels. In other words, you were in a state of musháhadah-Haqq (visualising Alláh Ta'álá.) At the rúhání level, you were in musháhadah of Alláh Ta'álá. You were then made slaves and sent to this world and a variety of tasks entailing enslavement and bondsman ship were entrusted to you.

Do you understand the concept? Do you comprehend the sequence of my narration?

Question: So, in what category are we classified, being mu'minín of Alláh Ta'álá's? Answer: We are in the category of being His slaves. Every individual has to ponder whenever he/she does any task: "Am I doing this under the mantle of enslavement or under the mantle of emancipation?" We have been given different body parts, each of which has a different function. We have hands, feet, eyes, a tongue, a nose, a heart and a stomach. It is obvious that the function of each is different and not one. Therefore, the function that the eyes have been given, the function that the tongue has been given, the function that the ears have been given, the function that the heart has been given, the function that the hands have been given, the function that the feet have been given, have all to be performed from the perspective of enslavement and under the mantle of the orders of Alláh Ta'álá.

We have not been left free, using the eyes any old how. So too the tongue, the ears, the hands, the legs, to be used any old how; to fill the stomach in any manner. So, all these body parts have been subjected to slavery on the basis that the owner is a slave. They are not to be utilised contrary to this concept of enslavement.

The taufíq of taubah can disappear

Were you to do this, you should be drowning in your perspiration and you should acknowledge and confess to your transgression. It should not

happen that, having transgressed, you develop pride. Confess quickly and show remorse. Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "From My side all sins are then forgiven. However, take care in the future. Do not persist with transgression. Otherwise:

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوْا ثُمَّ اٰمَنُوْا ثُمَّ كَفَرُوْا ثُمَّ ازْدَادُوْا كُفْرًا لَّمْ يَكُنِ اللّٰهُ لِيَغْفِرَ لَهُمْ وَلَا لِيَهْدِيَهُمْ سَبِيْلًا ؕ

Verily, those who believe, then disbelieve, then believe (again), then disbelieve, then continue with their disbelief – it is not the way of Alláh to forgive them and He will not guide them to the straight path. (S.4.137)

What it means is that the taufíq for making taubah has ended. Taubah has been made into a sport. The remorse that is now shown is just customary. The reasoned, Shar'í remorse, concurrent with the awe and respect of Alláh Ta'álá, is not present. There is no credence to this type of remorse. Otherwise, why is there transgression time and again? It is apparent that the remorse that is shown is not the remorse that is a reasoned and Shar'í remorse, accompanied with the awe and esteem of Alláh Ta'álá.

A káfir also shows remorse. Children also become ashamed. But these are not the same as true remorse. There is no credibility to this type of remorse. True remorse is to have regret for committing evil deeds, to be thoroughly ashamed. Then, how could the evil be repeated?

This is an illness. Just as a person suffers from a physical illness, this illness is the illness of sinfulness. This illness is catastrophic. At the time of death, the physical ailment will come to an end, but this illness of sinfulness does not end but accompanies the person. Its effects will be carried over to the other world.

Do you understand?

The importance of adopting taqwá

That is why Alláh Ta'álá says: "O mu'minín! I am emphasizing to you time and again!" Concerning what? Concerning taqwá. "Adopt taqwá!" Your actions, internal or external, individual or collective, let these be with taqwá. This is the essence and crux. The details have been given previously and this is the synopsis of the laws of Alláh Ta'álá. In other words, adopt

complete and perfect obedience, the methodology being: having correct beliefs and performing good deeds, external and internal.

Therefore, to repeat: what is the crux and essence of all this? It is taqwá. Therefore, Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "O mu'minín! I am alerting you and time and again, I am alerting you, so that freedom does not enter into you, for this freedom is a difficulty – it is something harmful. It is My compassion, My mercy and My favour, that is alerting you:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوااللهَ

O you believers fear Alláh! (3.102)

Alláh Ta'álá is making a promise to the mu'min bondsman, the sáhib-e-taqwá and Alláh Ta'álá is One who fulfils His promises, especially when we note that He has told us to keep to our promises. Not fulfilling a promise is a defect and Alláh Ta'álá is free of all defects.

Alláh Ta'álá's promise to the sáhib-e-taqwá

What promise has He made? Alláh Ta'álá states that He promises:

وَمَن يَتَّقِ اللهَ يَجْعَلْ لَّهُ مَخْرَجًا ۙ

That person who adopts taqwá, Alláh will find for him a way out for him (from difficulty). (S.65.2.)

Exit from where? Exit from that difficulty that he is involved in. A "difficulty" is actually that which is "harmful". So, Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "I shall create and establish those means and methods whereby you will be able to come out of that harmful situation." The promise has been made. What harmful place has not been specified, thus it means any type of harmful situation. So, what type of harm?

Let us see: There are two realms – this world and the hereafter. There are two possibilities: either harm or benefit. In this world also there can be harm or benefit and in the hereafter as well, there can be harm or benefit. If one is present then the other is absent.

Two opposites cannot co-exist. For example: If illness goes, then it is replaced by health. One may be superficial and the other strong. For example: illness disappears and health returns, but strength is also

necessary. So, harms have their different degrees and benefits also have their different degrees.

To continue: Is there any individual who does not want to remove himself from harm? Also, is there any individual who does not desire to gain benefit? There can be no such persons. So, seeing the means are available to come out of harm and to attain benefit, is it intelligent not to adopt these means? Of course not! Therefore, when the means for removing the harms are adopted, the harms will be shed and the benefit, which is the original state, will be evident. However, strength will not have been attained.

Do you understand this point?

Alláh Ta'álá is speaking of the harm that comes to you. What are the details concerning these harms? These are related to this world or the hereafter. For example: One is overtaken by poverty – this is a cause of harm. One falls ill – this is a cause of harm. One is humiliated by others – this is a cause of harm. And so forth. Alláh Ta'álá states further: "For those who are faced by these harms, I will create and establish means and methods to remove these harms so that you may find your way out of these harms."

You are not feeling sleepy? Some feel sleepy while resting on flowers but not on thorns. Let there be a musical show, then sleep does not come, but when one is sitting at virtuous places, then sleep comes instantaneously! Understanding comes when one is fully awake, when the constriction in one's temperament is gone. Just listening with one's ears is meaningless. This is mentioned just incidentally.

So, do you understand the points made by this servant?

This is a commentary of this áyet that is being given. You must have studied the commentary of Jalálain or a translation of the Qur'án Sharíf? Have you studied it in this manner? Have you understood it in this way? Has it been taught in this way?

Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "This is My promise: I will create and establish the means and methodology in this world – for this is a world where means have to be used ('álame-asbáb) – for the removal of harms and for benefit to come in their place," For strength to come into these benefits, there will be other methods but, at least, he has come out of his predicaments.

This is Alláh Ta'álá's promise for the muttaqí mu'min, to remove the harms that befall him.

Protection from sins is the benefit for the hereafter

Also, there is another realm. There, too, there is harm and benefit. The causes of harm and benefit of that realm occur in this world. The harm of that realm is to contravene the laws of the Sharí'ah, which means the commission of sins. So, contravening the laws is zulm and zulm is a harm, so that sinning – contravening the laws – is also a harm. And this harm is much greater. "Therefore, when you mu'minín adopt taqwá, I shall create the means, methods and resources within you to protect yourselves from those things that cause harm, i.e. sins. I shall create within your heart such a thing which will enable you to escape from sinning, which is much worse than the worst of worldly harms that can befall one. You will also remain protected from these harms. If that harm were to occasional befall you, the quality of that taqwá within you will be so moulded that you will become so utterly remorseful that you will repeatedly confess your sin to Me. I shall then remove the harm of that sin!"

Do you see? The promise has been fulfilled, whether the harm is a worldly harm – which is ghair-ikhtiyárí – or whether it is a harm related to the hereafter – which is ikhtiyárí. You have been given the choice and power – ikhtiyár. However, such a thing will be created in your ikhtiyár, in your irádah (resolve) that you will not have the resolve to act contrary to the Sharí'ah. Should such a resolve arise, you will immediately be warned and cautioned. If you do get involved, you will not be at ease without counteracting it and compensating for it. From My side, there will be forgiveness."

However, to whom has Záte-Bárí Ta'álá made this promise? He has made it to the muttaqí mu'min. "Worldly harm, if it comes, I will repel. And harm to your hereafter, which comprises sins, I will also repel from you. This I will do by creating a methodology in your heart." This is the promise that has been made by Haqq Ta'álá to the muttaqí mu'min.

إِنَّ اللهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيْعَادَ ۝

Verily, Alláh does not go against His promise. (S.3.9)

Then Záte-Bárí Ta'álá will cause this bandah to tread on the path of taqwá till death.

What do you understand? You have come and seated yourself over here.

Let me repeat: What is Haqq Ta'álá saying? "I shall maintain you as a muttaqí till death, seeing that you mu'minín have adopted taqwá with ikhlás and sidq. I shall keep you as such – that is My promise. Should you slip-up by chance, I shall not let you stay down. Should you transgress, then that procedure will take place whereby there will be a retraction and compensation. So, till death will I keep you as a muttaqí. You, O mu'minín, will return to Me as muttaqí because you were sent to the earth with taqwá. So, having returned with taqwá, here is Jannat waiting for you! This is your home. There is no censure here, no reprimand, no punishment and no torment. Yes, I will question you slightly out of muhabbat, to bring some happiness to your heart."

Do you understand? Do you understand the promise made by Záte-Bárí Ta'álá to this slave who lived in a state of bondage and in a state of being muttaqí mu'min? And Alláh Ta'álá will not go against His promise.

Removing hirs and tama' – greed and avarice

That leaves the second aspect, for which He has also made a promise:

وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ؕ

And He (Alláh Ta'álá) will provide for him (the muttaqí mu'min) from (sources) he never expected. (S.65.3.)

Now, this second aspect has also come in, concerning the stomach: Fill it. But subject to the laws and rules specified by Alláh Ta'álá. Let there be no hirs-o-tama'. Are hirs-o-tama' not harmful qualities? They are and very harmful!

The person afflicted with these qualities has no peace of mind. He cannot achieve repose. All the time he is spurned on: "Do this! Do that! Do it this way! No, do it that way! That person has accumulated in that manner – let me do the same! Let me also accumulate!" There is no thought given to what is já'iz or what is ná-já'iz. There is no concern of what belongs

to him or what belongs to others. Hirs-o-tama' spurs him on to become like this.

It is like taking strychnine: Is strychnine not a poison? By ingesting it, a person will definitely create difficulties for himself and harm himself internally.

Therefore, O muttaqí mu'min, these qualities within you that cause harm, will be removed from you in such a manner that your thoughts will not even stray in that direction. In their stead will come a quality of benefit, which is qaná'at.

Have you understood the point, or not yet? You have taken a tasbíh and seated yourself and even earned the name of "Tasbíhwálá"! What I have explained is the actual, detailed and proven "tasbíh"!

Hirs-o-tama' are harmful qualities and qaná'at is a beneficial quality. Haqq Ta'álá is saying: "O muttaqí mu'min, I will create within you such a methodology that the harmful qualities of hirs-o-tama' will be removed and the beneficial quality of qaná'at will replace these. If you are a real muttaqí mu'min, then your gaze will not go to the means. If your gaze does fall on the means, it will only be from the aspect of usage and not with the concept that the means will bring success to your tasks. I have created the means. Are the means pointless? Should your gaze turn in the direction of the means, it will be only by way of utilisation, which is My command, that its utilisation is also 'ibádat, provided there is no hirs-o-tama' and there is qaná'at.

However, the greater the amount of means used, proportionately the difficulties will increase. If there is no qaná'at, then there will be no sleep either. This person will not be able to eat with freedom and peace of mind. He will not have a life of ease and comfort. It will be just the opposite: He will be running around like a headless chicken!

To repeat what Alláh Ta'álá has said:

وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ۚ

And He (Alláh Ta'álá) will provide for him (the muttaqí mu'min) from (sources) he never expected. (S.65.3.)

"O muttaqí mu'min, in attaining your rizq, I will create within you the

methodology of removing another harmful quality and replace it with a beneficial quality. This is My promise to you. My methodology will encompass both your spiritual rizq (bátiní) and your physical rizq (bataní)). I shall establish such methods, such avenues, such forms that will make you receive bátiní rizq as well as bataní rizq from far and wide places."

Bátiní rizq: rizq of the muhabbat of Alláh Ta'álá

"From the aspect of 'ibádat, I shall instil in your heart that you sit in such places where the rizq of My muhabbat will keep on increasing – and not decreasing, for decreasing is harmful – and which will keep on providing assistance in My muhabbat. This is beneficial." So much so, that Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم had also said:

اَللّٰهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِيْ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يَّنْفَعُنِيْ حُبُّهُ عِنْدَكَ

O Alláh! Grant me Your love and the love of those whose love will benefit me by You.

"I shall instil in your heart such qualities that will save you from harms – like being in wrong places and, instead, being in places that will assist in My muhabbat – qualities that will be of benefit to your bataní rizq and your bátiní rizq."

Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم has rendered "rizq" as "muhabbat" and muhabbat is a bátiní quality. You can see, rizq has been attained, rizq being of two types: bataní and bátiní. In the latter category as well, you will be given such methods that will never occur to you. You will wonder: "How did I manage to perform this 'ibádat?" The answer from Alláh Ta'álá is. "I caused you to do it – do it this way!" The weakness in you has been replaced with strength. Why has this been done? The reason is that you are a muttaqí mu'min, a sáhibe-taqwá. Therefore, weakness has gone and strength has come, together with courage and valour. This is the promise of Alláh Ta'álá manifesting itself: *"Min haythu lá yahtasib"*.

Just look at the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم: What was their condition before they became sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم? Their condition was pitiful: they were a disgraced people, living in dire poverty. However, when they became mu'min – muttaqí mu'min in the proper meaning – then how did the unseen

favours and unseen assistance from Alláh Ta'álá not pour down on them! All types of blessings and assistance, both bataní and bátiní, were showered on them. Numerous examples are there as evidence. As long as the mu'min remained this way, the promises of Alláh Ta'álá were also fulfilled in this manner. When the mu'min changed, then changes also came.

Alláh Ta'álá states:

إِنَّ اللهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتّٰى يُغَيِّرُوْا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۗ

Verily, Alláh does not change the condition of a nation as long as they do not change what is within themselves. (S.13.11.)

This is sufficient proof of what I have said. Did changes not appear afterwards? Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "Being a mu'min, when he brought in changes in his taqwá, he was expressing a desire for changes to come from My side as well. So, I brought about the changes!" The reason for saying this is that changes do not come without a cause. To substitute good with evil for no valid reason is zulm. Zulm is a defective characteristic and Alláh Ta'álá is free of any defects and, therefore, free of zulm.

We, who are living in this world in this age, should ponder over our condition. Where Alláh Ta'álá has, on numerous occasions, alerted us: "Ittaqulláh! Ittaqulláh! Ittaqulláh! Ittaqulláh!" Ask: are we exemplifications of this or not? If not, then what are we portraying? Will the promise of blessings from Alláh Ta'álá remain in place or not? We have, therefore, caused a change to occur by the way we act and behave.

Muráqabah-e-maut & muhásabah-e-a'mál

Do you see? Záte-Bárí Ta'álá has repeatedly directed the mu'min, because of the demands of his ímán, towards taqwá. "Adopt taqwá! What is the reason for not adopting taqwá? You are mu'minín. Just as you have conviction on My Being and attributes, similarly, you have conviction on the hereafter and on the reckoning that will take place. Therefore, taqwá should come into you through the demands of your conviction. Taqwá should not be departing. You should not be acting contrary to taqwá.

"O mu'min! Why are you not pondering on the scene of the plains of resurrection and reckoning in the hereafter? These plains are inviting

you towards taqwá, that the reckoning will take place after death. So, why are you forgetful of death? Why are you not engaged in pondering over death (muráqabah-e-maut)? Why are you not taking stock of your deeds (muhásabah)? O mu'min! You should be continuously taking stock of your actions and, at the same time, thinking about death and about the day of reckoning in the hereafter. I have commanded you to engage in muráqabah-e-maut and muhásabah-e-a'mál. When this is done, then taqwá will come into you. This is what I have been explaining to you and I have also presented the method for attaining this, that you should continuously be thinking of attaining perfection (kamál) in your taqwá. That is why I am saying:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللهَ ۚ إِنَّ اللهَ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ ۝

O you who believe! Fear Alláh! And let every soul look to that which it sends forth for the morrow (i.e. Qiyámat.) And fear Alláh! Verily, Alláh is informed of what you do! (S.59.18)

The phrase "let every soul look to that which it sends forth for the morrow (i.e. Qiyámat)" is explicit on the instruction for engaging in muráqabah. This is proof of meditation on death – muráqabah-e-maut.

Tasawwuf, in its entirety, is the very Sharí'ah – internally and externally.

A qissah of the king taking a buzurg's vitamin tablet

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه mentioned a qissah:

There was an age when the Muslims and even kings, had tremendous faith and confidence in the buzurgs and had the habit of visiting them regularly. A particular king had this habit as well and he used to regularly visit a certain buzurg who used to live in the jungle.

This particular buzurg had the routine of taking a special tablet at a specific time daily. It so happened that the king also came to visit daily at this specific time. One day the thought struck him: "This buzurg is taking this tablet daily but there appears to be nothing else to eat or drink besides

the tablet. I wonder why he takes this tablet?" The buzurg became aware of his thinking through kashf. He gave the king one tablet, saying: "You take and drink this tablet." The king became extremely happy and went home and drank the tablet.

Now, this tablet was one that was extremely invigourating and stimulating, so the king became extremely steamed up. He had to let off steam. He visited all his wives and then visited all his laundís, but his urges were still not satisfied. He thought to himself: "Ohoho! This is my condition by taking merely one tablet! Oho! And what about the buzurg? Living in the jungle, he has one daily! He is maintaining his buzurgí and also fulfilling his passions! Damsels must be visiting him!"

Despite having such thoughts about the buzurg, the king did not stop visiting the buzurg. The buzurg again perceived what he was thinking through kashf.

Suddenly, the buzurg's mood became very serious. He addressed the king very sombrely: "It seems that there are only forty days left before your death! My advice is that you hand over the reins of your kingdom to your son – make him the crown prince. And prepare for the hereafter!"

he king became terrified. The words of the buzurg were like the hiss of a snake as it prepares to attack. He forgot about the tablet as the spectre of death rose in front of him. As he was about to leave to commence his preparations, the buzurg handed him forty tablets, saying: "Take one everyday so that you do not become weak."

The king departed. He made his son the heir-apparent to the throne and entrusted the running of the affairs of the kingdom to him. As for himself, he devoted his entire time to 'ibádat. Sticking to the buzurgs instructions, he took his one tablet daily. He was thus nourishing himself with both rizq bátiní and rizq jismání. Forty days passed in this manner. However, the awaited death did not come! He waited a few days more but still death did not overtake him.

He decided to visit the buzurg again and complained to him: "Hadhrat! What have you done? My kingdom has slipped out of my hands and here I am, still alive!" The buzurg replied calmly: "Your kingdom has not disappeared – it is with your son. Whenever you wish, you take it back

and take up the reins of the kingdom again. It has not gone anywhere. But, what I am interested in knowing is whether you have been taking the tablets given to you or not?" The king replied: "Huzúr, if I had not taken them, I would have been like a dead person without death coming to me." The buzurg spoke again: "So, you took your tablets daily? Tell me then, how many wives did you go to everyday and how many of your laundís did you go to everyday?" The king replied: "Huzúr, death was staring me in the face. Where could I go to them? With death standing in front of me, my thoughts did not even go in that direction!"

Now, listen carefully to what the buzurg had to say! He said: "You were given respite for forty days, whereas I do not have respite for the space of one breath even. If I breathe in I am not certain whether I would be given an opportunity to breathe out again, and if I breathe out I am not certain whether I would be given an opportunity to breathe in again! I do not have respite even for the duration of even one breath!" The king was full of regret for his unfounded suspicions: "Huzúr, I humbly ask for your forgiveness. You have answered the doubts I had."

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه mentioned this qissah for the lessons it contained. The king was faced with the spectre of death: When would it come? How would it come? In his concern, he forgot completely about his wives and his laundís. Do you see the effect of muráqabah-e-maut?

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has said:

اَكْثِرُوْاذِكْرَ هَاذِمِ اللَّذَّاتِ اَيْ اَلْمَوْتُ

Increase your remembrance of that which terminates desires, that is death.

This is encompassed in the statement of Alláh Ta'álá:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللهَ وَلْتَنْظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللهَ ۚ اِنَّ اللهَ خَبِيْرٌۢ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ ۝

O you who believe! Fear Alláh! And let every soul look to that which it sends forth for the morrow (i.e. Qiyámat.) And fear Alláh! Verily, Alláh is informed of what you do! (S.59.18)

The essence of this is the following:

مُوْتُوْا قَبْلَ اَنْ تَمُوْتُوْا

Die before your death.

This means that those desires that are associated with your nafs should be forged such that they are utilised according to the orders of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá. This is because you are His slave. Should you discard the commands of Alláh Ta'álá until the time of your death, then you are not His slave. You have reversed the roles. You are not His slave.

Marital Relations should be subject to the Sharí'ah

Therefore, approach your wives subjecting yourselves to the commands of Alláh Ta'álá. Did the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم not approach their wives? Was death not in front of them? Did the Nabí صلی الله علیه وسلم not approach his wives? Was he not absorbed all the time in a state of musháhadah-Haqq?

Approaching your wives is also 'ibádat. Otherwise, why would Alláh Ta'álá have created the means for this? Of course, It should not be done outside the boundary of the commands of Alláh Ta'álá – this would be contrary to the demands of taqwá. If it is done within the bounds of commands of Alláh Ta'álá, then this is taqwá. This is 'abdiyet, this is enslavement. Does this answer any doubts any of you may be entertaining?

Do you want to exceed the Nabí صلی الله علیه وسلم? Do you want to live exceeding the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم in taqwá? Were they not muttaqí? Their taqwá was such that, in comparison, your taqwá is insignificant. Yet, they carried out their duties appropriate to the situation and subject to the orders of Alláh Ta'álá. They lived as bondsmen of Alláh Ta'álá, manifesting their 'abdiyet all the time. But, are you trying to live with greater taqwá and greater musháhadah than the Nabí صلی الله علیه وسلم? Did he not have children? And, are children born without the agency of a wife? Has this answered your questions and removed your doubts?

Coming back to our original theme: it is apparent that when the question was posed: "Alastu-bi-rabbikum?" in the 'Álame-mítháq, Alláh Ta'álá did not order us to accept this obvious fact but we, on our own, accepted it. Having accepted it, we have declared our 'abdiyet and enslavement. And there are no specific and set duties of a slave: he has to carry out all those

tasks that Záte-Bárí Ta'álá entrusts to him, whenever he is ordered to do so. To be continuously involved in this, is enslavement.

Ta'lím and debating

Among the tasks that he has to perform, is the task of ta'lím. This task has first priority. It is this task that Alláh Ta'álá set Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام to work on right at the start, that is, the task related to 'ilm:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا

And He taught Ádam all the names. (S.2.31.)

Alláh Ta'álá taught Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام the names of everything (with their attributes and effects). Therefore, the first task of this slave, after coming into this world, is to attain 'ilm to the extent of necessity. For practical purposes, it is sufficient to learn 'ilm to the extent of one's needs. However, from the aspect of expertise, there should be a group from within the community of Muslims, who should equip themselves with 'ilm, not necessarily for the purpose of practising on, but in order to provide proof of the truth of Islám in the face of the enemies of Islám.

That is why the mu'minín are victorious in every situation from the aspect of establishing the truth of Islám in debates and academic discussions. If the mu'min has taqwá, then he is victorious in this world as well. If not, then he is victorious at times and defeated at times, but on the day of Qiyámat he will be fully victorious. In actual fact, complete victory is for the mu'minín.

وَأَنْتُمُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ ۝

You will overcome them if you are (indeed) believers. (S.3.139.)

Therefore, the sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم were victorious in their debates as well, as long as they adopted taqwá in the correct meaning of the word. For example, they were challenged by the kuffár who tried to mock them by asking: "Your nabí taught you to pass urine and pass stool as well? He taught you to stand, sit and lie down as well? He taught you to eat and drink as well? He taught you how to live with one another as well? He

taught you how to behave in your locality as well as when on a journey?" The sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم replied calmly: "Yes! Before, we were like animals, leading lives of animals. Our Nabí صلی الله علیه وسلم taught us to be human beings in the correct sense. He taught us – and teaches us – everything. It is Alláh Ta'álá who teaches through His Messenger."

Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم has said:

عَلَّمَنِيْ رَبِّيْ فَاَحسَنَ تَعْلِيْمِيْ وَاَدَّبَنِيْ رَبِّيْ فَاَحْسَنَ تَاْدِيْبِيْ

My Rabb taught me and He gave me a beautiful education. My Rabb refined me and gave me a beautiful character.

On another occasion, Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم has requested,

اَللّٰهُمَّ انْفَعْنِيْ بِمَاعَلَّمْتَنِيْ وَ عَلِّمْنِيْ مَايَنْفَعُنِيْ

O Alláh! Grant me benefit from what You teach me and teach me that which benefits me.

So, what is the first duty on entering into enslavement? It is to attain 'ilm to the degree of necessity. The Hadíth Sharíf states:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيْضَةٌ عَلٰى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ وَ مُسْلِمَةٍ

Seeking of 'ilm is compulsory on every Muslim

It has become fardh on every Muslim male and female to attain 'ilm to the extent of necessity, whether one learns through the medium of Arabic, Fársí or Urdú, using authentic kitábs; or whether one learns by asking the 'ulemá or by listening carefully whilst sitting in majális. The point is that it not incumbent that one has to study through kitábs. A method is being shown.

What kitábs did the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم have? Yes, they had one kitáb, the Qur'án Sharíf, which was taught to them by the nabí of the final era, Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم. There were no other kitábs. The Qur'án Sharíf had certain principles laid down in it and Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم used to elucidate on these, which we call Hadíth Sharíf. There were no other kitábs. At a later period, kitábs came into existence. So, it does not matter whether one learns from kitábs, or by querying verbally or by sitting and listening,

but we have to learn. We are responsible and accountable.

As for that person who is immersed completely in studying the Sharí'ah in order to attain expertise, it is not appropriate and worthy that he should involve himself in other work, otherwise there will be shortcomings in one of the two. Another reason is that this person is of royalty and he is engaged in royal work. For a person engaged in royal work, it is not fitting that he should be engaged in other work. This was explained in the example of the government employee who is barred from doing other work while in the employ of the government.

This was the practice of our akábirín that, despite the fact that another task may be very praiseworthy and beneficial, yet they would abstain from it if it were to interfere and cause a fault in their ta'límí tasks. So much so, our buzurgs, knowing very well the importance of Sulúk and bai'at, yet they always forbade students from taking bai'at during the period of their studies. Hadhrat Mauláná Rashíd Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه did not make bai'at of any student before the student completed his studies. The reason for this is that, if his attention is directed in a different direction, it is evident that harm will be caused to his studies.

There is a dire need for one such jamá'at which will serve 'ilme-Dín exclusively. On this basis there should also be one such jamá'at which is engaged purely in the safeguarding of the Dín and teaching of the Dín. This group can only be the scholars of Dín – the ahle-'ilm. It is for this reason that those in the madrasah should keep themselves aloof from other activities. Rasúlulláh صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم has said:

اِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ مُعَلِّمًا

I have come solely as a teacher

Therefore, do not call on the ahle-'ilm, who are engaged in this type of work, to be involved in another direction. Do not lure them with endearing talks to divert them from the lifestyle that they have to that of another lifestyle. They will slip and fall. You will become sinners. So, let them carry on with what they are doing, with full concentration and absorption, to become experts. This applies both to the student of Dín who is completely

dedicated to his studies and to the mudarris who is fully absorbed in teaching. Yes, the one who is only superficially carrying his task, may do as he pleases. Do you understand?

Summary of the majlis and du'á

This is a brief explanation being presented to you, of the methodology concerning the episode that took place in the 'Álame-míthác, when Alláh Ta'álá asked: "Alastu-bi-rabbikum?" And the reply given: "Qálú balá!"

O you who are tálibán-e-tazkíyah of your záhir and your bátin! You should be residing in such an engrossed manner, initially correcting your 'aqá'id and also with a'mál-e-sálihah, both záhirah and bátinah, with silence of the tongue and tranquillity of the heart, with adherence to the Hanafí School of jurisprudence and with ikhlás and sidq.

May Alláh Ta'álá bless me and you with everlasting taufíq, with ikhlás and sidq.

آمِيْنَ يَا رَبَّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

Khudá háfiz.

MALFÚZÁT OF HADHRAT MAULÁNÁ MUHAMMAD MASÍHULLÁH KHÁN SÁHIB رحمة الله عليه.

[These are extracts from the kitáb "Ma'árif Masíhul-Ummat," compiled by Mauláná Meherbán Alí Barotí Sáhib. This kitáb was compiled from notes he had made during his stay in Jalálábád.]

1) There is no such deed (amal) which will be of benefit without 'ilm: either that deed will not be correct or it may not be accepted (qabúl). However, its opposite – 'ilm without amal may – be of benefit to some degree. For example: 'ilm of tauhíd will be a means of salvation from the fire.

2.) (For a Muslim, as far as tauhíd is concerned,) to maintain one's ímán this much i'tiqád is sufficient that Alláh Ta'álá is independent and not in

need of others (be-niyáz aur mustagní) and that Alláh Ta'álá did not create even a single atom without wisdom (hikmat.)

3) Hadhratwálá (Hadhrat Thánwí) رحمة الله عليه used to say: "I have noted down the essence and crux of Tasawwuf in just two words: Ittilá and ittibá – reporting back and following instructions.

In other words, the muríd should keep on informing his sheikh his condition absolutely correctly; and he should carry out the methodology shown by the sheikh without any doubts or misgivings. If he has achieved these, then understand that the sálik is traveling along the path of Sulúk with the correct etiquettes of Taríqat. Such a person will traverse the journey very rapidly.

However, if he goes contrary to this – he hides some condition of his where he will be degraded; and reveals those conditions where he will earn praise so that his sheikh may be overawed by him and appear elevated in his eyes – goodness, how will such a person who wants to impress his seniors with his own high status, ever succeed? Such a person is a mutakabbir of the highest order – he has the highest degree of arrogance – even though he may have the appearance of a sálik. In actual fact, he is a hálik – one who is destroyed. That is why the sálikín need to be cautious and ask themselves: "Truly, are there shortcomings in me or not?" If there are shortcomings, they should concern themselves with removing these.

4) t is not permissible to place one's life in danger, except in a situation of jihád. For this reason, how can it be permissible to be so excessive in one's ma'múlát so that one's health is affected? This excess and diminishing may be done in acts which are nawáfil. However, there is no room for excess and diminishing in those categories which the Sharí'ah has set down.

For example: A person says: "I feel very elated today. Today I shall perform six rakats of saláh instead of the stipulated four." On the other hand, he says: "Today I am feeling tired and weak. Come, I shall perform only two rakats instead of four." Can this be correct? Instead of earning thawáb, he will be punished.

5) One's qurb-e-Iláhí increases with nawáfil. Therefore, besides the

specified nawáfil, one should carry out other nawáfil also, so that there may be an increase in one's qurb. The sálik should be concerned all the time on attaining qurb. He should find out which a'máls bring about greater qurb and he should adopt these. These may be the performing of namáz, or keeping rozah, or reciting tasbíh and zikr, or distributing sadqah and charity.

However, one should not overdo these to that extent that one's health suffers. One should do abundant a'mál, but stay within the boundaries. It is the view of the súfís that one cannot attain success without thrashing the nafs. Dear friends! Just ponder: The seeker of dunyá toils excessively in seeking wealth, to the extent that he forgets who he is, whereas dunyá is a perishable item. It is a contemptible and an ignoble item. And you, being a seeker of Mahbúbe-Haqíqí, are negligent! What a shame on your condition!

6) There are two closely related words: one is basárat and the other is basírat. The first, basárat, refers to what is ordinarily called "sight," whereas the latter, basírat, refers to the "seeing" by the heart. Because basárat is connected to a physical quality, it can only view physical items. On the other hand, basírat, seeing it is connected to something that is metaphysical – the rúh – it can visualise non-physical items. When basírat develops in a person, the person is drawn towards zikr. Uneasiness disappears and there is a diminishing of difficulties. The reason being that the persons gaze is now on haqá'iq (divine truths or realities).

7) In the opinion of the muhaqqiqín sages, a special striving – mujáhadah – in attaining objectives (maqásid) is beneficial and a basis for thawáb. However, making mujáhadah in the means to the objectives is merely undertaking and tolerating hardships.

For example: Namáz is an objective. If a person were to bear heat and cold in order to perform his namáz, then he will definitely get thawáb. Say it is winter season and one is sitting covered warmly in a blanket. It is time for namáz but one does not feel like going to the masjid. However, taking into account the importance of namáz, the importance of namáz with jamá'at

and the virtues of performing namáz in the masjid, one bears the hardship of going out in the cold and one performs one's namáz in the masjid, this effort is termed mujáhadah, for which there will be a reward.

On the other hand, take wudhú: this is not an objective in itself but a means to the objective. If one were to undertake difficulties in making wudhú for no valid reason, then this will not be termed mujáhadah. For example: It is winter and hot water is available, but this person makes wudhú with cold water; or there is water available, but this person walks one or two miles to fetch water. So, in these instances the appearance is that of mujáhadah and ordinary people can be deceived. In reality, this is not mujáhadah. There is no promise of reward in undertaking these difficulties.

7) Some buzurgs appear to have undertaking great difficulties in carrying out tasks that are not objectives. However, these are not undertaken with the intention of thawáb. These difficulties are undertaken as a means of treating one's nafs.

There is a story of one buzurg: His nafs desired to eat some halva. Initially, he forbade his nafs, saying "O nafs! I don't have money for halva. And to beg from others is disgraceful." When his nafs would not listen and persisted, he finally said: "Very well. Come, I shall feed you halva."

A little way farther he came across a miller milling. This milling was done with an ox driving the milling stone. He approached the miller and asked: "Brother, if I were to grind your grain till this evening in place of the ox, what will you pay me?" An amount was agreed on and he then did the work of the ox till the evening. With the money that he received he bought some halvah and presented it to his nafs: "Here my son, have some halva." His nafs was contrite: "Please forgive me. I will not make this mistake again in future!"

Note: When the nafs insisted on eating halva, which was a luxury item for which he had no money, the buzurg decided to teach his nafs a lesson. He did this by getting his nafs to toil and sweat in order to earn the necessary money for the halva. With the legitimately earned money, halva could now be bought. However, undertaking the hard labour and toil and also the

disgrace of having to toil like an ox, was not worth it to merely satisfy a craving for a luxury item like halva.

APPENDIX

"AL-HIDÁYAH"

"Al-Hidáyah" ("The Guidance") does not need an introduction to those following the Hanafí School of jurisprudence. It was compiled by Sheikhul-Islám Burhánuddín Abul-Hasan Alí Ibn Abí-Bakr Al-Falghání, who was born in Marghinání, Transoxania (between Bukhara and Samarkand, present-day Uzbekistan), in 511 A.H. He commenced writing the kitáb in 573 A.H. and it took him 13 years to compile. He kept rozah every day that he wrote the kitáb.

It is a kitáb of Hanafí fiqh of outstanding depth and is the standard kitáb to which all the Hanafí 'ulemá refer. As a basic textbook, it is taught in all the dárul-'ulúms.

The point that the readers' attention is being drawn to is the fact that the English admitted that they would not have been able to administer the British colonies and especially the Asian ones, were it not for the fact that they had recourse to this kitáb, "Al-Hidáyah". This was mentioned to us by our Sheikh, Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه during the course of a majlis. To substantiate this, a little bit of research revealed some very interesting facts.

In order to understand the role "Al-Hidáyah" played in the administration of the British Empire, It is necessary first to understand the historical and political background of the colonial expansion of England to the East.

Historical background – The English East India Company

This company was given its charter by Queen Elizabeth I of England in the year 1600. It established "trading posts" in various Asian territories.

Invariably, these colonial companies had military and naval forces to "protect" their interests. At that time there were other European colonial countries besides England – notably Spain, France, Holland and Portugal – vying with one another for the lucrative trade with the Asian countries in the East, with the result that there were many battles between them, on land and sea. The English East India Company finally won over the other countries, mainly the Dutch, but also the French and Portuguese and transformed England's trade routes into a vast colonial empire over a period of one hundred and fifty years, becoming a mighty political and military force.

In 1689 it established administrative districts in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in the Indian subcontinent.

Warren Hastings (1732-1818)

He was the son of an Anglican clergyman and was educated in Westminster, London. At the age of 18 he decided to go to India as a clerk for the English East India Company. He was a brilliant administrator and he rapidly shot through the ranks of the company, serving on the administrative boards of Calcutta and Madras. In 1772 he was appointed to the most important post of the governorship of Bengal. In the following year, the English government curtailed the power of the Company, but appointed Warren Hastings as the first Governor General of India.

While in Bengal and afterwards, Warren Hastings introduced far-reaching administrative, financial and judicial reforms. This point is very important and it brings us to our subject: "Al-Hidáyah".

Warren Hastings and "Al-Hidáyah"

We do not know much about Warren Hastings relationship with Muslims, but it is apparent that he was a very intelligent person and a keen observer and statesman. He must have been in close contact with Muslims and came to know of the importance of Islámic jurisprudence and of the kitáb, "Al-Hidáyah". This much is evident from the fact that he enlisted the services of some scholars to translate the "Al-Hidáyah" into Persian from the Arabic.

Introductory address to the "Al-Hidáyah"

The introductory address of the translator who translated "Al-Hidáyah" from the Arabic into Persian gives us some insight into the great effort that was made to make this kitáb available to the English.

After praising Alláh Ta'álá and sending salutations on Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, his family and the Companions, he goes on to state:

"...it is impressed – that, from the day that the delightful region of Bengal was cheered by the rays of Government by the Nawáb Governor General, Mr. Warren Hastings, the whole of his wise and prudent attention was occupied and directed to this point – that the case and protection of the country and the administration of public affairs, should be placed on such a footing that the community, being sheltered from the scorching heat of violence and tyranny, might find the gates closed against injustice and oppression, and that the range of sedition in those who deviate from the road of truth might be limited and shortened:– and since this hope must be fulfilled through the influence of the holy Law of the Prophet and the injunctions and inhibitions of the chosen sect – this denizen of kingdom of humility and solitude, named Ghulam Yehee, was therefore instructed and empowered, together with Molla Taj-ad-Dín, Meer Mohammed Hossein and Molla Shareeat Oolla, to translate from the Arabic language into the Persian idiom certain treaties upon the Law, but particularly that excellent work, the 'Hedaya'...."

It is apparent that, besides the "Al-Hidáyah", other works were also translated into Persian by the translator. There is no date attached to this introduction by the translator, but it is definitely done while Warren Hastings was Governor in Bengal, before he assumed the Governorship of the whole of India.

Dedication

It appears that the Persian translation was then used to prepare a translation into English. This was done by Charles Hamilton, who dedicated the English translation to Warren Hastings in the following terms:

To Warren Hastings, Esq.
Late Governor General of Bengal
Sir,

After the labour of several years, I am at last enabled to present you with a translation of the "Hedaya".

To you, Sir, I feel it incumbent on me to inscribe a word originally projected by yourself and for some time carried on under your immediate patronage, – However humble the translators abilities and however imperfect the execution of these volumes may be, yet the design itself does honour to the wisdom and benevolence by which it was suggested; and if I might be allowed to express a hope upon the subject, it is that its future beneficial effects, in facilitating the administration of Justice throughout our Asiatic territories and uniting us still more closely with Our Mussulman subjects, may reflect some additional lustre on your Administration, – I have the honour to be, with the utmost respect and the most lively gratitude and esteem, Sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

– CHARLES HAMILTON."

It appears that this project was extremely successful. How much of the laws from "Al-Hidáyah" were put into practical application, is something that is open for some keen researcher to discover. However, what is very evident is that this translation became indispensable to the English in their administration of the Asian colonies.

Advertisement to the Second Edition

Proof of this is given in the "Advertisement to the Second Edition" by Standish Grove Grady, written for the legal profession. I quote:

"...I now present to the profession the Second Edition of the Hedaya. As this work has been made a textbook by the Council of Legal Education, for the examination of the students of the Inns of Court, who are qualifying themselves for the call to the English Bar, with a view to practicing in India..."

The emphasis is mine. From this, it is obvious that the translated version of "Al-Hidáyah" had become so important that, by the year 1980, when this second edition was printed, it had already become a textbook for lawyers to study in order to pass their examinations and practice law! Not only did

Grady think it suitable for students only, but his vision was much wider. He ends his "Advertisement to the Second Edition" as follows:

"Although the present Edition has been published with a view of assisting the student to prosecute his studies, yet the hope is entertained that the Judge, as well as the Practitioner, will find it useful, particularly in those provinces where Mahommedan demands a great portion of the attention of the judiciai, as well as that of the practitioner. It is hoped, also, that it may be found useful in promoting the study of the law in the several Universities in India, it being advisable to assimilate the curriculum in both countries as much as possible.
2 Plowden Buildings, Temple. April 1870.
Standish Grove Grady."

[Emphasis is mine. Quotations are from "The Hedaya, commentary on the Islámic Laws," translated by Charles Hamilton, published by Nusrat Alí Nasri, for Kitáb Bhawan, New Delhi, India. 1979]

BOOKLET NUMBER NINETEEN
Shawwál 1428 – October 2007

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh, with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of our Sheikh رحمة الله عليه and the du'ás of our well-wishers, this booklet, For Friends Number Nineteen, is being presented to you.

This majlis has been translated from the tape obtained from Hassim's Tape Library. This majlis was conducted in 1983 at the residence of Hají Ebrahim (Bháí) Dadabhay in Roshnee, South Africa. Brother Hassim Bulbulia رحمة الله عليه used to record our Hadhrat's رحمة الله عليه majális and distribute the tapes through the tape library that he had established. (Refer to the end of this

majlis.)

This was our Hadhrat's رحمة الله عليه last visit to South Africa. His first visit to South Africa was in 1971. How did Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه come to visit South Africa? This is a bit of a long story, which will be narrated very briefly over here.

Mauláná Ismail Kathrada Sáhib, who, at the moment, is running running a madrasah in Vryheid, provided the following information:

He – Mauláná Ismail Kathrada Sáhib – had been studying in Verulum under the tutelage of Hadhrat Munshi Sáhib رحمة الله عليه (who went to stay in Inanda later). After completing his hifz, Mauláná Ismail Kathrada Sáhib, upon recommendation by Mauláná Omarjee رحمة الله عليه, was sent by his parents to become an 'álim to Deoband dárul-'ulúm in 1957.

One day in the year 1962, while at the station in Deoband, he was told that there was a very pious person, the principal of the madrasah in Jalálábád, at the station as well. It turned out that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه – meaning Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib – was waiting to purchase a ticket to go to Saháranpúr. Seeing that the queue was rather long, Mauláná Kathrada Sáhib offered to stand in the queue and buy a ticket for Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه. This he did. Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه invited him to come to visit him in Jalálábád. Mauláná Kathrada Sáhib was still studying at Deoband and could not go at that time.

However, Mauláná Kathrada Sáhib was planning to go to a place called Hazárah, near Peshawar in Pakistan, for taráwíh. He had been there previously at the request of his parents, whose ustáds hailed from there. On the way to Hazárah he stopped in Jalálábád to meet Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه. While there he discussed with Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه his plans for further studies and Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه suggested that he came to Jalálábád to complete his studies. Mauláná Kathrada Sáhib did just that in 1963.

His parents and family members were most upset. In the first place, they were not happy that he had gone to a place like Deoband, and going to Jalálábád appeared to them to be even worse. Mauláná Kathrada Sáhib wrote a long letter to them to explain what Jalálábád was and who Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه was. His parents took the letter to Mauláná Kathrada Sáhib's ustád, Hadhrat Munshi Sáhib, who read the letter and reassured his parents

concerning Jalálábád and Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه. Later Hadhrat Munshi Sáhib himself came to Jalálábád and became bai'at to Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه . In this way, others came to know of Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه.

Efforts then commenced by Hadhrat Munshi Sáhib and the family members of Mauláná Ismail Kathrada Sáhib to bring Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه to South Africa. Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه was in England at the time. Problems were encountered in obtaining a visa because of the laws of the apartheid government in South Africa. However, through the good services of Hají Ebrahim Abramjee Sáhib of Laudium, a visa was finally obtained. Thus, Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه made his first trip to South Africa in 1971.

Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه came to South Africa again in the years 1975/6, 1978/9 1981/2 and 1983. Thereafter, many people invited him back, but due to other commitments and ill health, he was unable to come. Alláh Ta'ala willed that more work be taken from him by him remaining in Jalálábád so that people from all over could come to meet him there.

Dr.I.M.

بِسْمِ اللَّـهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis conducted by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhul-láh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه in Roshnee, South Africa, at the residence of Ebrahim (Bhai) Dadabhay Sáhib in the year 1983.]

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

Blessings of the Qurán Sharíf

"Bismilláh" is to be found here. In fact, there is need for "Bismilláh" at every time and on every occasion and is necessary initially and in the very beginning. There is greatness in the Kalám of Alláh Ta'álá, that being the Qur'án Sharíf. Alláhu-akbar! And with what does it start? It starts with "Bismilláh – Bismillá-hir-rahmán-nirrahím". Then comes:

"Alhamdulilláh".

On what is hamd recited? It is on ne'mats. When is hamd recited? When we show gratitude to Alláh Ta'álá. We will say "Al-hamdulilláh". Furthermore, there is no greater blessing than the Kalám of Alláh Ta'álá, the Qur'án Sharíf.

The whole basis of life, the whole of life's functioning, with its peace, with its comforts, with its luxuries, with its happiness, with its cheer, in this world as well as the hereafter – which is our original home from which we had been sent, i.e. Jannat – the basis of all aspects of our lives in this dunyá and the ákhirat, is the Qur'án Sharíf, the Kalám of Alláh Ta'álá.

The Qur'án Sharíf contains in it the teachings of the Taurah; it has the teachings of the Injíl in it; it has the teachings of the Zabúr in it; it has in it the kitáb and scriptures revealed to Hadhrat Ibráhím عليه السلام; it has in it the scriptures revealed to Hadhrat Músá عليه السلام, those which are in addition to the Taurah. That is not to say that all the teachings from these scriptures are in the Qur'án Sharíf. Those which have been abrogated are not included. These were subject matters meant for those times and these were laws meant for those respective times. However, those teachings and laws that were meant to be still applicable are all to be found in the Qur'án Sharíf. Those laws that were revealed by wahí in the Qur'án Sharíf by Alláh Ta'álá and which He did not want to preserve, were abrogated.

مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ اٰيَةٍ أَوْ نُنْسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلِهَا ؕ

No part of Our revelations as We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We bring (in place) one better or the like thereof. Do you not know that Alláh is able to do all things? (S.2.106.)

"That wahí which We had revealed previously, were appropriate at those times. We have removed these. We have removed them from the chest and We have replaced them through wahí with something better and We have established them till the day of Qiyámat."

Differences in status

It shows that there is a difference between one type of wahí and another. In the same way there is a difference between one Rasúl and another.

تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلٰى بَعْضٍ م

Of those Messengers, some of whom We have caused to excel others (S.2.253)

This indicates that not every Rasúl is equal to another Rasúl. Similarly, the wahí that was revealed to whichever Rasúl is not equal to another wahí. In the former case, both are Rasúls and in the latter case, both are the Kalám of Alláh Ta'álá, but they are not all equal.

This being the case, then taking a group other then the Rasúls, that is, the sahábah رضی الله تعالى عنهم, they are also not all equal. Their statements also are not equal.

Let us go a step further down and take the group that come after the sahábah رضی الله تعالى عنهم, these being the auliyá: they are also not all equal to one another. Their statements are also not equal.

Let us go a step further down still and take the group of general mu'minín: they are also not all equal and their statements are also not all equal. This being the case, then their actions are also not all equal.

Dunyá likened to carrion

Let us go still lower. The lowest section after ákhirat is dunyá. Dunyá has two meanings. The one means "lowest of the low" – disgraced to the utmost degree. This humiliated condition of dunyá is likened to the carcass of a dead animal.

اَلدُّنْيَاجِيْفَةٌ وَطَالِبُوْهَا كِلَابٌ

Alláh Ta'álá states that the dunyá is like a carcass. Do not become one desirous of it. Alláh Ta'álá has likened a person desirous of dunyá to a dog.

Therefore, a Muslim should never refer to himself as a dunyádár. It is unbefitting of him, with his own tongue, to say that he is a dunyádár. The reason is that a dunyádár has been likened to a dog by Alláh Ta'álá, so how can he call himself a dog? But you will find that people coming for du'á and one tells them: "You make du'á yourself. One who is afflicted himself knows the anguish he is going through." The reply given is: "We are the dogs of this world. Please make du'á for us." So, if they themselves refer to themselves as dogs, so why should there be an objection if the buzurg, whose qissah has been related, calls him a dog?

The story, related to us by Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه goes as follows:

A buzurg had a female dog. She gave birth to puppies. As I had mentioned just now, while we were walking, that it is permissible to keep dogs for hunting, for shepherding goats and cattle, and for protecting one's fields or house. The condition is that they should stay out of the house. The reason being that where there are dogs the angels of mercy do not come. So it is not correct to keep dogs in the house – one is chasing away the mercy (of Alláh Ta'álá) by doing so. Similarly, that house that has pictures (of animate objects) in it, the angels of mercy do not enter such a house. The angels of mercy have an aversion for dogs or pictures of animate objects.

Munásabat leads to bonding

Now, Hadhrat Jibra'íl عليه السلام used to come to Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم with wahí, as we know. Besides these occasions, he also used to come on other occasions to meet Rasúlulláh رحمة الله عليه. There developed a friendship between the two. There was a tremendous amount of munásabat between the two, unmatched to the munásabat with the other angels.

Wherever there is congeniality between temperaments, friendship develops. One will find grass-cutters will have friendship with fellow grass-cutters, wrestlers with fellow wrestlers, cinema-goers with cinema-goers, drinkers with fellow drinkers. This is because of munásabat.

So also, the Alláhwálá will develop friendship with the Alláhwálá to the degree that this person's temperament desires to be an Alláhwálá. Pay attention to this and let me repeat: The degree of friendship with the Alláhwálá will be to the degree of the desire in the heart to be an Alláhwálá – to that degree will there be friendship with the Alláhwálá.

Some will have a small desire, others a greater desire and others still a tremendous desire. So, some will meet the Alláhwálá only occasionally. Others will want to be with them all the time. The desire in them is so much that they wander around searching all the time for the Alláhwálá and, upon finding them, they will cling on to them and will not leave them. This is so because they have developed a deep bond with the Alláhwálá – they have developed munásabat with the Alláhwálá.

This bonding is seen in our tablíghí brothers. Those who are doing the

work of tablígh and have done so consistently for a long period, have developed such a bond with the effort of tablígh that they will be involved with the work of tablígh all the time, being with others involved in the work of tablígh and sitting with them. When they sit anywhere, their conversation will also revolve around tablígh. They will not speak on any other topics. Also, when they deliver a bayán at an ijtimá' they will speak on tablígh according to their own methodology and will not discuss any other aspects of tablígh.

Whereas it is acknowledged that Dín is a combination of two items: ma'múr-bihá and manhí-anhá. In other words, the first is to bring into practice that we have been ordered to do – ma'múr-bihá – and secondly, those actions which we have been ordered to abstain from – manhí-anhá. These are the two aspects: one to carry out and one to abstain from. The combination of these two is called Dín.

Do you understand?

The Kalimah Sharíf & ma'múr-bihá and manhí-anhá

How does one know this? By the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá this comes to mind. We know this from the Kalimah Sharíf. It is from the Kalimah Sharíf that one can deduce that Dín has two categories, one is ma'múr-bihá and the other is manhí-anhá.

How do we deduce this? There is not need to go to great lengths or to overwork the mind. The problem is that we have discarded taking work from our intelligence in the proper manner. So, how can correct ideas come into one's mind? How can correct concepts enter?

Take the whole of Dín, all those volumes of kitábs that have been written full of all the ahkám of the Dín, all of them are explanations of "Lá-iláha-illalláh", exegeses of "Lá-iláha-illalláh", both of ma'múr-bihá and manhí-anhá. The commentary of it, of "Lá-iláha-illalláh", is "Muhammadur-Rasúlulláh" صلى الله عليه وسلم. That is why Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is called "Sháreh-Islám" (Commentator of Islám) and "Sháre'-Islám" (one who detailed the Sharí'at of Islám) and not "Báni-Islám" (founder of Islám). Who founded Islám?

Islám was not founded or formulated by Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم but by

Alláh Ta'álá. When some say that Islám was founded by Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, it is said metaphorically and not in reality. In reality it is Alláh Ta'álá who laid the foundations of Islám. The terms "sháreh" and "sháre'" mean: one who shows the road and one who portrays something in all its aspects, to the minutest detail respectively. That is why Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is called "Sháreh-Islám" and "Sháre'-Islám". Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had no right to create the laws of Islám. He had the duty of explaining the laws, according to what Alláh Ta'álá wanted.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْنَا بَيَانَهُ ؕ

Then, verily, upon Us (rests) the explanation thereof. (S.75.19.)

What is this "bayánah"? It is to fully explain something, to open it up. Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "We will cause our Kalám, which has appeared in a concise form, very briefly in the form of laws, to be expounded openly and fully through your lips."

Therefore, what Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has said is also "Qur'án", the difference being that the words of Alláh Ta'álá being revealed in the form of the kitáb, the Qur'án Sharíf, are made tiláwat of, whereas the "Qur'án" of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is not made tiláwat of. The wahí that forms the Qur'án Sharíf is referred to as matlú', whereas the words uttered by Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم are gair-matlú' and referred to as Hadíth Sharíf. This is an explanation of the Qur'án Sharíf. No tiláwat is made of the Hadíth Sharíf. And the basis of all this is "Lá-iláha-illalláh".

Nafí-ithbát – negation & affirmation

As I was saying, there are two categories to Dín, namely ma'múr-bihá and manhí-anhá, which are derived from "Lá-iláha-illalláh". "Lá-iláha" is negation (nafí). Illalláh is affirmation (ithbát). "Lá-iláha" means that there is no deity, no objective, no purpose, no loved one and, in reality, no existence. In reality, none even existing. We may appear to be existing as we can see one another walking and speaking, but did we exist before?

هَلْ أَتٰى عَلَى الْإِنْسَانِ حِيْنٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْئًا مَّذْكُوْرًا ۝

Has there come upon man (ever) any period of time in which he was a thing

not remembered? (S.76.1)

Man had such a phase that he was not even mentioned – he was non-existent. Subsequently, Alláh Ta'álá brought into existence man by creating him. Finally, man will cease to exist in the dunyá.

So, not existing in the dunyá in the beginning and then, in the end, also passing into non-existence, then how can one say that he is existing? When the two terminals are non-existent – the beginning and the end – then what type of existence is the intermediate phase? So, in reality, man has no existence. Then, the only existence, in reality, is that of Alláh Ta'álá. Have you now understood the meaning of "Lá-iláha"?

It does not mean that there is absolutely no entity worthy of worship at all. The literal and initial portion is that there is none worthy of worship. If there is none in existence except Him then, it follows, that only He is worthy of worship.

The question arises: Why should He be worshipped? The answer is that the One who is worthy of worship should have all the qualities for the needs of the creation to the highest degree of perfection, to the extent that there is just no possibility at all of any deficiency arising in them. These qualities are in Him.

If you take 'ilm, He has this quality to that degree. If you take qudrat, it is to that degree. If you take irádah, it is to that degree. To be able to create a formulary for the kingdom He rules without any fear, he has this as well to that degree. To cause harm, it is to that degree. To cause benefit, it is to that degree. To grant honour, it is to that degree. To cause disgrace, it is to that degree. So, honour is in His hands and disgrace is in His hands; wealth is in His hands and poverty is in His hands; illness is in His hands and good health is in His hands; complete and full power is in His hands; complete and perfect 'ilm is in His hands; enforcement of any and all actions is in His hands. These are qualities not found in anything else to that degree. He is the One to provide wind, to provide water, to provide rizq, and so forth. One who has all these qualities has all the right to be worshipped. Anybody who does not have these qualities has no right to be worshipped. "Lá-iláha" has negated everything else.

This is why, if a person just keeps on repeating "Lá-iláha" and remains firm on this and does not add "illalláh", he has become a káfir! The reason is that he has negated everything – that there is none worthy of worship and that there is none as one's objective – and thereby negated even Alláh Ta'álá! So, after the nafí there must be added the ithbát. First is the non-existence of everything else and then the existence of Alláh Ta'álá. One has negated the right of worship from the whole creation and then affirmed the worship of Alláh Ta'álá in absolute terms. After that comes affirmation – ithbát, that is "illalláh".

So, "lá-iláha" has nafí in it and "illalláh" has ithbát in it. So, "lá-iláha" has manfí in it and "illalláh" has muthbát in it, and manhí-anhá is manfí and ma'múr-bihá is muthbat. Do you understand the point made? So, "lá-iláha" denotes manhí-anhá and "illalláh" denotes ma'múr-bihá. The combination of the two – manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá is Dín. Possibly this is the first time you have heard it explained in this manner, by the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá.

To explain it again: "Lá-iláha" is negating (nafí) and "illalláh" is affirming (ithbát). So, "lá-iláha" will include all that is manhí-anhá and "illalláh" will include all that is ma'múr-bihá. Dín is comprised of two categories, manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá – that which we have to abstain from and that which we have to carry out respectively. When both manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá are lectured on and when both these are acted on, then this will be considered to be acting on the perfection of Dín. If only one category is taken up and the other category left out, how can this be called perfection in Dín?

Importance of parhez – dietary restriction

That was the first point. Another point: Both, according to common knowledge and according to the statements of the hakíms and doctors, there is one important aspect to consider.

Let me illustrate it: You will find a friend telling his friend, out of concern for his welfare: "What is this that I see you running to the doctor every now and then, forever drinking medicines?" The friend replies: "Why, what is wrong with that?" His friend advises: "Dear brother, you should go on

a parhez as well. Abstain from eating those items that are harmful to you. I know that you are very fond of tea, but tea for you, at present, with the ailments you have, is harmful.” Parhez is the important aspect of treating a patient. Even doctors agree on it. Is that not so?

[This was addressed to a person sitting in the majlis.]

He is not speaking. Did you not have breakfast? Did anybody see whether he was sitting at the dastarkhán at breakfast time? Nobody was looking. Good. One should not be looking at people when they are eating.

Some etiquettes of eating

Let me digress. This is a majlis, so whatever topic crops up, well and good. Whoever it applies to will benefit.

This we heard from Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه: Hadhrat Mu’áwiyah رضی الله تعالی عنه is a sahábí and is one of the more prominent ones, is that not so? People have created doubts for no reason about his status.

He had some guests whom he was feeding. Among the guests was an Árábí. The peasant bedouins staying in the surrounds of Madínah Tayyibah were called “Árábí”. He was also there, eating with the other guests. It so happened that, by chance, Hadhrat Mu’áwiyah’s رضی الله تعالی عنه gaze fell on him. Being a peasant, he was eating in his own fashion, placing big pieces of rotí in his mouth. We would break a rotí into eight pieces. He was breaking them into only two large pieces and eating them. Hadhrat Mu’áwiyah رضی الله تعالی عنه told him: “You are eating such big pieces? It is not good to eat such large pieces.” The bedouin retorted: “It is not befitting that honourable people should sit and eat at your dastarkhán. You are keeping a watch on our mouths?”

Firstly, the etiquette is that one should not watch another person eating. Have you now come to know the mas’alah? Some have the habit of staring at others to see how they are eating. People look at others to see how they are eating. This is incorrect.

Secondly, one should also take into consideration the following situation: a person is sitting and eating and there is nobody sitting with him. You do not have an informal and open relationship with him. Do not go and sit next to him to eat. The reason being that he is now going to feel shy and

he will not eat properly because of your presence. He feels uncomfortable because the relationship between him and you is not a relaxed one. One should not go and sit there, but many just go and sit. Many díndár people are unaware of this mas'alah.

These are masá'il of the dastarkhán. Masá'il are of different categories: individual (infrádí), collective (ijtimá'í) and grouped (jamátí).

Thirdly, if a person is involved in some 'ilmí work, for example he is reading a kitáb, then another person should not unnecessarily go and sit next to him. If there is some need, then he should approach the person and tell him that he has something to discuss with him. Otherwise, he should not go and sit near him. If he does, it will disturb this person and cause an interference in his reading of the kitáb. Similarly, if a person is busy writing a letter, he should not look to see what he is writing. Looking at him writing will cause a certain anxiety in the writer, and he will not say anything either. If he has some work he should approach him, state his work and go away. Similarly, one should not go and sit next to a person who is eating. If there is some urgent work, one should approach the person and tell him so. These are masá'il, infrádí, ijtimá'í and jamátí

To continue the qissah concerning the bedouin guest of Hadhrat Mu'áwiyah رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ: He had retorted: "It is not befitting that honourable people should sit and eat at your dastarkhán. You are keeping a watch on our mouths?" He stopped eating and stood up to leave. Hadhrat Mu'áwiyah رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ apologised profusely and begged him to sit and finish his meal, but the bedouin did not accept his apology and he left.

Taqwá and 'ibádat

Let us now go back to the previous topic of parhez, manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá. Even the doctor will tell the patient to abstain from those foods which are harmful. Medication will come afterwards. As for sequence, parhez comes first and medication afterwards. Parhez means: to leave aside, to stop. From here we can see that taqwá comes first and 'ibádat comes afterwards.

What do we call 'ibádat? What does it mean, both in common usage and as far as the Sharí'at is concerned? Take an example: if a person is making just his five-times namáz, would he be called a great 'ábid? Nobody will say

so. Now, take somebody who is making his five-times namáz, together with the nafl that go with them and, in addition, he is performing other nafl namáz like Ishráq, Chásht, the nafl before zawál, Awwábín and Tahajjud. Not only that, but he stays awake half the night in ’ibádat.

يَأَيُّهَا الْمُزَّمِّلُ ۙ

O thou covered in thy sheet! Keep vigil the whole night long...(S.73.1.)

[Hadhratjí stopped speaking at this point and greeted a certain Mauláná who had just entered then and who had sat down at the back. Hadhratjí honoured him by asking him to come and sit near to him, saying that a white-bearded person is honoured by the black-bearded person, indicating to those sitting in front to make place for him. Hadhratjí then digressed from the topic he had been discussing in consideration of the visitor, before going back to the theme he had been discussing. Speaking more to the visitor, but for the attention of all present, Hadhratjí said:]

Qualities to seek in companionship

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه used to say: “Let there be merely two people with one, but let them be people of understanding. If there are a hundred people with one, but if they are not people of understanding, then what joy is there?” If one has only one wife, but she is a person of understanding, recognises and accommodates the temperament of her husband, Jannat is made for him! On the other hand, a person has four wives, but they are a burden, it is now dozakh for him! The husband will feed all of them, yet...

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه used to say: “I am also insán, I am also human. Who does not wish to have solace in his heart? Look at Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام. He was in Jannat and he was in the musháhadah of Alláh Ta’álá.” Being in Jannat and his heart being in musháhadah of Alláh Ta’álá, his heart would not have been unoccupied. This was a time before he came to live on earth. Therefore he was free of any cares and worries that would trouble anybody staying here. There was complete sukún in Jannat – tranquillity and peace of mind. Yet, what did he feel? He felt that he was alone and needed companionship. From this, it is apparent that this feeling is an innate human desire, and that the foundation of this desire stems from

there. This desire arose despite being in a place like Jannat and being in a state of musháhadah-Haqq.

So, Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه used to say: "I am also insán, I am also human. I also desire that one or two should be with me. However, they should be ham-maslak and ham-mazáq – of the same school of thinking and the same tastes. If my maslak is of one type and the maslak of the others is different, there will be misery. If my mazáq is of one type and the mazáq of the others is different, again there will be misery."

Some etiquettes of a gathering

What does one do when a person sits with a stony face? His face looks as if the world's problems are on his shoulders. One becomes anxious when one is with such a person. What does one say to him? How does one converse with him? When one speaks to him he does not understand. When something humorous is said, there appears no smile on his face. One does not feel like speaking then.

These are some incidental points that have come in-between. These are some principles of etiquettes of a gathering. If, in a gathering the speaker, during the course of the talk, says something which is of a humorous nature where smiles should appear on the faces of the listeners – not outright loud laughter – and the smiles are not evident, immediately the speaker's heart becomes constrained. The speaker's spirits are dampened. His buoyancy is gone. This is because of the mute attitude of the listener. He sits like an idol. Who can speak to an idol?

Another point: If the speaker is a sáhibe-zouq (cultured, refined) – he may not think much of himself but others consider him to be a person of esteem – and a smile does appear on the face of the listener, the sáhibe-zouq will be able to make out if the smile is not genuine. He will still become constrained because the listener's hypocrisy will be exposed.

The listener may be sitting there, but he is not sitting happily, with proper faith and confidence. He looks here and there. Sometimes he speaks with this person and then that person. Sometimes he teases this person and then that person. He is sitting, but out of politeness, not for his bátiní benefit. He is not concerned. He is not interested in progressing. He does

not want his temperament to incline towards goodness. Why? The reason is that the ’ilm that he has attained, the deeds he is doing and the concepts he has formed in his mind, he considers these three to be sufficient and correct and he does not consider it to be good for him to go out of this framework. So, whatever he is doing, he is merely deceiving himself and fooling others.

The sáhibe-zouq will detect this. Why does the sáhibe-zouq not say anything? His temperament is one of kindness. That is why he does not say anything. But, the person will understand even though he is not told anything. By way of example: “Goolam Hoosain understands even though he is not told anything directly.” This is said out of muhabbat and whosoever’s name comes to the lips is mentioned by way of example only.

You must have studied the kitábs of grammar. The name “Zaid” comes in frequently to illustrate different aspects of grammar. So, listen to this qissah: A simple-minded student came to study at a madrasah. Explaining the noun, verb and object in Arabic grammar, the ustád said in Arabic: “Zaid hit Amar.” The student asked: “Why did Zaid hit Amer?” He was simple in his thinking. The ustád tried to explain: “Zaid did not hit Amer. This is said as an illustration to understand the grammar.” The student said: “I do not want to study such kitábs in which lies are stated.” He had wiláyatí ’ilm (an extreme type of honesty in the pursuit of ’ilm.) He did not study. Possibly Alláh Ta’álá wanted to take some other work from him.

A humorous incident and another serious one

Just listen to this humorous incident:

Our Pathán brothers from the nobility, the ra’ís, used to say that, finally, one Pathán student, after much difficulty, became an ’álim. He was a good ’álim, one of the senior ones, but for some reason or other, he went astray. Some obstinacy developed in him. (In other words, there were no ’álims amongst them and this one hope of the Pathán clan came crashing down!)

Now, one must remember, swords are the toys with which Patháns play and amuse themselves. Take this incident, on a more serious note, that Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه related to us. Of course, all what I am relating comes

from him. There was in Lucknow a Pathán who did not perform namáz at all. He had passed middle-age. Somebody advised him: "Khánsáhib, at this stage your legs are dangling in the grave. Start performing your namáz now." Khánsáhib asked: "Why? Whatever for? What will I receive?" His friend replied: "You will receive Jannat." Khánsáhib said: "Wah! Jannat is in our hands. One slash over here and another slash over there and one has attained Jannat. What is there to it?"

This is exactly what happened. Near Lucknow, the Hindus attacked a village of the Muslims. The Muslims were few and the Hindus were many. How long could they withstand the attack? The Khánsáhib from Lucknow, mentioned above, went to a molvísáhib and told him: "The Hindus have attacked the Muslims in a village. If I go to assist the Muslims and it could happen that I am killed, will I be a shahíd? I am asking because, if I go to assist the Muslims and I get killed, but I am not counted as a shahíd, then what is the benefit? I would have attained nothing. I would have given my life for no reason."

He was a person of understanding. He went to enquire. Such "ignorance" is praiseworthy. Nowadays, nobody asks even. Unlike before, people involve themselves in politics and they do not enquire about anything. There is a local saying: "It does not matter. Let him go the scaffold – God will deal kindly with him!" Similarly, the cry is: "Confront them. Fight them." It does not matter what the results are. This is mentioned just incidentally.

To continue: The mauláná said to the Khánsáhib: "If you were to be killed, you will be a shahíd." Satisfied, he went home, had a bath, changed his clothes, took his sword and lance and went to the village which was under attack. He fought valiantly on the side of the Muslims and killed many. But for how long? Finally this Khánsáhib became shahíd.

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه said: "What the Khánsáhib had said he had demonstrated practically." He did not negate his action but said: "What the Khánsáhib had said he had demonstrated practically, that one slash over here and another over there and one has attained Jannat."

The Sharwán-Sayyid lineage of Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه

[The mauláná-sáhib who had come a bit late and was now sitting near Hadhratjí, asked: "Where did the title 'Sharwání' originate from?" Hadhratjí replied:]

Sharwán is a town in Kabul in Afghanistan. The label of Khán-Sharwání that is attached to us came about as follows:

Our forefathers were of the Sádát [Sayyids – the progeny of Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم] and came from Arabia. When they came, some had wives, others did not. In those days journeying was by foot. They reached Kabul in Afghanistan, and stayed there for a very long time.

The nation of Patháns used to honour the Sayyids tremendously, irrespective of the person's qualities. The mere fact of him being a Sayyid was sufficient to honour him. Also, it comes in the kitábs that, if there is any doubt about a person being a Sayyid, respect and honour him even more! Why? If somebody is a Sayyid from the lineage of both parents, the mother and the father, then you yourself will respect them. However, if somebody claims to be a Sayyid and there has arisen a doubt for no reason whatsoever, then you should respect him even more.

So, the Patháns used to respect and honour the Sayyids a tremendous amount. The people of Kabul welcomed them with open arms. Among them were young unmarried men as well. When they married, they did so locally, seeing that they had been there for some time.

In time to come, when they left Afghanistan, their lineage was traced to the nearest relatives, these being the father and grandfather. This normally happens. One does not go back to the generations before that, the great-grandfather and others before him. Seeing that the immediate family came from Sharwán, the family came to be known as Sharwání.

Very interestingly, once, when I was in Pakistan right in the north, on the border of Afghanistan, one evening I was taking a walk. My host was with me. While walking, my eyes fell on a milestone. These are stones along the road to indicate the distance to various places, as we see here in India as well. This milestone had written on it "Sharwán". I asked my host: "How does the name Sharwán appear here?" He explained that this was the road to Kabul and the sign indicated the direction to Sharwán in Kabul.

When the family came to India, seeing that they had come from Kabul in Afghanistan, which was famous as being the land of the Patháns, the

family came to be known as Pathán, but we are Sayyid. We are Sayyid from the paternal side and Pathán from the maternal side. The maternal Pathán side was remembered when the family came to India, but the paternal Sayyid side was forgotten. So, that is our ancestral history, both Sayyid and Pathán, but Sayyid in reality, because in the Sharí'at, lineage is based on the paternal lineage and not the maternal lineage.

Explaining who is an 'ábid?

Let us go back to our previous theme. We were discussing being an 'ábid. Somebody who is performing just his five-times namáz will not be called an 'ábid. An 'ábid will be that person who performs additional nafl 'ibádat in addition to the five namáz – that is, nafl namáz, nafl tiláwat, nafl fasting, nafl zikr. He stays awake at night in 'ibádat, performing his Tahajjud namáz. He also performs the namáz of Ishráq, Chást, Zawál and Awwábin. Whenever you see him he has the Qur'án Sharíf open in front of him, busy with tiláwat. Come the days of the 13th, 14th and 15th of the month, the Ayyáme-Bís, he is fasting. He also keeps the nafl fasts of Muharram, Shábán and Zil-hajj. It is as if he is a "qá'imul-layl" and "sá'imud-dahr" (one who stays up the whole night in 'ibádat and fasts everyday). He will be called an 'ábid.

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلْمُزَّمِّلُ ۙ

O thou covered in thy sheet! Keep vigil the whole night long...(S.73.1.)

"Mudath-thir" refers to clothes and appears elsewhere. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was feeling grieved at something and this áyet was revealed on that occasion. By this form of address Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "The manner in which you are being addressed is to indicate goodness towards you, that this manner of My addressing you is to bring to you sukún, a connection, a heartfelt attachment, tranquillity and focussing of your attention towards Me.

"Where have you lied down, immersed in your grief? How can you lie down in grief just because of what somebody had said? Stand up." It was night time.

Analysing this súrah, Súrah Muzammil Sharíf, we can see that it has Tasawwuf in it through and through, from the very beginning to the

end.

Remedy for grief

We can deduce that when a Muslim is grieved, that some sadness has affected him – which is bound to happen now and then, sometimes light, at other times heavy, sometimes big and at other times small – he should not focus his attention in that direction, or else his grief will increase. Yes, if he has the passion to deliberately increase his grief, then nobody has any cure for such a person. He is like that person who has a taste for eating poison and is munching away at some strychnine, and you are trying to help him and you try snatching the poison away from him, but he repulses you. Such incidents have occurred.

A qissah: a tragic event of the boy with an eye illness

What I am going to relate to you is a known incident which happened in front of me. There was a youth who, for some reason or other, found it difficult living in his community. He had a harsh temperament. He used to quarrel and hurl abuse and fight with each and everybody. Yet, he came from a good home, a noble family. He developed an illness of his eyes. It became so severe that the fear came into him: "I will become blind!" He then started having more fears (waswasah). "If I were to become blind, considering my atrocious behaviour with my family members and others, who will care for a blind person like me? My life will be devastated. Neither will my family care for my comfort because of my loose tongue and misbehaviour, nor will members of the community care for me, because I was abusive to them." So, he found it burdensome to live.

He went to his brother, who owned a firearm. "May I borrow your gun? I am thinking of going hunting. Load the cartridge and give it to me." The brother did so and handed it over to him, knowing that he was a keen hunter.

He brought the gun home. His mother saw the gun in his hand and asked him: "What is the gun for?" His wife also saw him with the gun and she also asked: "What is the gun for?" He did not reply, but went with the gun straight into his room. Both his mother and wife got worried. Something

was not right. They went after him but he had locked the door. They both pleaded with him to open the door and let them in so that they could take the gun from him, but he was set firm on his plan.

His behaviour was like that of Shaitán, who had set his mind on disobeying Alláh Ta'álá, even though Alláh Ta'álá had tried to make him understand. Alláh Ta'álá had addressed Shaitán directly, without any intermediary, yet he refused to understand.

This boy's mother and his wife kept on pleading with him, trying to make him understand and see reason. However, when somebody has resolved firmly on a course of action, then even if Alláh Ta'álá were to explain to him, he will not understand. How will he understand the explanations of ordinary people like us? So, he did not listen to either his mother or his wife.

When in the room, he took the gun and placed the barrel over his heart and pulled the trigger with his thumb, shooting himself through the heart. He died on the spot.

Why have I mentioned this? In order to explain that nobody is free of grief befalling him or her. Big or small, light or heavy, grief comes to everybody. One should now not sit with it. One should rather put it aside, shift one's gaze away from it, and get busy with some task. Haqq Ta'álá is prescribing this treatment. It is Alláh Ta'álá who is treating the nabí. Nobody else is capable of doing this.

Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم had lied down in grief. What Alláh Ta'álá is saying I am going to express in my own words: "Oonh! What are you lying down for? Come! Come! Up you get! Make Alláh, Alláh. Come with us. Today we are going to the garden for a walk and cheer ourselves up. Come, there is a very amazing person who is here with us today." This is what a friend tries to do, be sympathetic and cheer him up.

Important rules with regard to nafl 'ibádat

So, when Alláh Ta'álá stated: "Qumel-layl", it encompasses the whole night. Alláh Ta'álá then modified it. Even if it is not the whole night, then a small portion of the night –"illá-qalíl". Then this was explained even further as half the night: "nesfahú". Even if this cannot be managed, very well, less

than this. In this way, decreasing it gradually to a very small amount – "awinqus minhu qalílá". On the other hand, if you feel like it, if your heart desires it and if you are not too tired, then more than this – "aw zid alayhi". In other words, freedom to choose has been given.

Through Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم we are being being addressed, that those who are 'ábids have been given a choice. Besides performing what is fardh, wájib and sunnate-mu'aqqadah, a choice has been given. Look at your health. Look at the free time you have. Look at the ease (sahúlat) you have. Having looked at these, do not sit back contented merely by the performance of what is fardh 'ibádat, whether it is namáz, rozah, zakát or hajj. After the category of 'aqá'id, these four 'ibádats are well-known.

Now, zakát is not compulsory on everybody. Hajj is not compulsory on everybody. However, namáz and rozah is compulsory on every báligh and sane Muslim. There is no getting out of these. However, when it comes to nafl, Alláh Ta'álá has given us a choice.

Where have you sat back complacent, after having performed your five-times namáz? Move forward. Progress. Do not sit back contented with merely your five-times namáz. When it comes to progress as far as the material, perishable dunyá is concerned, you have so much passion and you just want to progress more and more. Even your friends will tell you to move ahead, to go forward.

Material progress and Díní progress

Something comes to mind: The poor maulánás are criticised, not only now but for some time past, and it is said: "Whenever the 'ulemá speak, they only speak on moving forward with regard to namáz, rozah, zikr and so forth. They never speak about worldly progress. No 'álim ever speaks about material progress."

Our response is that even Alláh Ta'álá encourages worldly progress, so how can an 'álim forbid it? "So, why is this subject not mentioned?" The answer to this is that the 'álim will speak on those subjects which are neglected. He will discuss those topics of the Dín where there is negligence. As for those areas where there is self-generated enthusiasm, what need is there to speak to a person in such situations? Not only is he self-motivated,

but there are his wife, his friends, his relatives and others in the community to encourage him as well. They will tell him: "You have made a large amount of profit from this venture, why not start another venture?" He starts another venture and makes even more profit. He is then encouraged some more by his friends and relatives. So, why should the 'álim also fall in line? We do not know what would happen then!

So, the criticism levelled at the 'ulemá that they do not encourage worldly progress, is unfounded. It would be justified only if the people were negligent concerning worldly progress. To speak on this topic now would be completely superfluous. And it is forbidden to speak on superfluous matters. So, why speak on this topic?

The 'ulemá are Ná'ib-e-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم

Let me continue where I had left off: In the beginning of the áyet quoted above, Alláh Ta'álá is addressing us by addressing Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. "Stand up! One does not sleep through the entire night." O you students! O you 'ulemá! Listen carefully! One does not sleep through the entire night. The 'ulemá are, after all, the Ná'ib-e-Rasúl (represent Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم), is that not so?

But nowadays, as we hear people say that we are Ná'ib-e-Rasúl of dirham and dinár. And what was said about the Ná'ib-e-Rasúl over there? The Ambiyá do not leave behind dirham and dínár, but they leave behind 'ilm in their inheritance. So, that person who has taken up complete 'ilm has taken up his whole share of the inheritance. It is not befitting for the 'ulemá to attach themselves in any aspect towards dirham and dinár – towards material progress, towards money. You call yourselves Ná'ib-e-Rasúl and you extol the virtues of 'ilm, but you have become complacent with what you have studied of 'ilme-Rasúl, that – instead of being engrossed in increasing this knowledge more and more, having learnt something, you should be learning something more – you have involved yourselves in earning dirham and dinár just like the dunyádárs. You will then not be called Ná'ib-e-Rasúl.

A Ná'ib-e-Rasúl will be that person who will be pursuing the four categories after 'aqá'id, that is, pursuing perfection of 'ibádat, correction

of mu'ámulát, refinement of mu'ásharat and embellishment of akhláq. Such a person will be called a Ná'ib-e-Rasúl. As for his material life, he will have complete qaná'at with what is halál-tayyib. If he is absolutely strong of heart and the wife and children are also strong-hearted, then he has permission to leave even those means which are available for attaining wealth. This person will be called a tárikad-dunyá.

The difference between a tárikad-dunyá and a matrúkud-dunyá

There are two categories here. One is that person who is a tárikad-dunyá, as explained above. The other category is that person who is a matrúkud-dunyá. There are no virtues attached to being a matrúkud-dunyá. What is a matrúkud-dunyá? He is that person who, on a gair-ikhtiyárí basis – that is, not out of choice – has no wealth at all. Nothing comes his way. He has nothing. He has not had to let go of anything, but wealth has left him.

The tárikad-dunyá, on the other hand, is that person who, despite having the means of accumulating wealth, has abstained from doing so with his heart. He does not utilise those means of earning that he has at his disposal.

From here we can see that those mu'min Muslims among the general populace who castigate such 'ulemá and say: "They sit with folded arms doing nothing to earn a living. They have their eyes on the earnings of others," become sinners of the highest degree. They have earned sins by such statements. Remember, they are not asking you for anything. They do not come begging to your door; they are not obstructing you in any way. Why are you upset? Why are you being critical? It is your right not to give.

Why? For this reason: Take the following illustration: You have an employee. You are paying him ten rupees everyday. Now, on this one day you have a visitor. Your worker has prepared an excellent meal. The visitor enjoys the meal tremendously. He has noticed that the worker has cooked the meal. The visitor asks the worker: "How much wages do you get?" He tells him. "What about board and lodging?" "That is free." The visitor then makes him an offer: "Very well. I will give you double the amount. I will give you twenty rupees daily. You come and work for me."

See what type of friend he has? The visitor comes to his friend's house and wants to take the worker away by offering double the amount he is earning. What is the worker's response? He says: "I am very disappointed at what you are saying. Is this the type of friendship that you have? What a horrid suggestion you have made! I have been working here for a very long time. He has looked after me all these years. Even though you are offering me twenty rupees daily, I am not a 'nímak-harám'. I have eaten the salt here. I have spent a long time here eating his salt. The ten rupees I earn here are better than the twenty that you offer. I will not go with you."

Have you understood his point?

If you have, then one other point by way of caution: Now, it so happens that somebody else comes to know of what happened. He tells the worker: "I heard that a visitor to the house offered you twenty rupees and you refused the offer. You are a very foolish person. This was progress for you. Double what you are earning is progress. Where will you get such an offer? You are very stupid." The worker replies: "You keep this progress. I am not one for it. This 'backwardness' with contentment is sufficient for me. It is not in my nature to be disloyal."

Do you understand the point?

In a similar manner, the Alláhwalá is saying: "I also know how to progress. If I were to set my mind in that direction, I will progress more than you. However, the task that He – Alláh Ta'álá – has set out for me, I am involved in executing that task. And He has taken responsibility for my rizq. Why should I do farming? Why should I be involved in trade? Why should I seek employment? I will not do so. If He gives, I will eat. If He withholds, I will not eat." This person has a strong heart – qawíyu-qalb. That person who is a true 'ábid – he is a walí in the context of the Sharí'ah – he will not pay any attention in that direction.

He will eat if provided wih food, and not eat if the food is withheld. He is one with qawíyu-qalb – a strong heart. The mas'alah is for such a person.

He may be strong-hearted, but his family may not be so. Therfore, in consideration of the family, he may do something or other. But if the family is also strong-hearted, then he will not do anything.

Our pious predecessors

Take the family of Sháh Walíyulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه, himself and Sháh Abdul Azíz Sáhib, Sháh Abdul Qáder Sáhib and others in that lineage: Can anybody prove that they did any farming? Were they involved in any trade? None whatsoever.

The following episode we heard from Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه: When British rule was established, the people in the top echelons of the British government came to meet Sháh Abdul Qader Sáhib. Whenever somebody gains some fame in an area, the eyes of the rulers fall on such a person as well. They fear such people also. When these British came, there were others also sitting there – students, attendants and others – they sent a message informing him of their coming and seeking permission to meet him.

Others have taken our teachings

This is very much part of our teachings: When going to meet somebody, inform him first. When you enter, make salám and ask permission to come in. When permission is given, then enter. These are our teachings but we have discarded them. The English study a lot and they have studied our kitábs. Whatever was of worldly benefit to them from studying our kitábs – the áyát of the Qur'án Sharíf, the teachings in Hadíth Sharíf – they have taken for themselves. Whatever they considered was good from the material aspect they took for themselves. They have utilised the best from our teachings.

We, on the other hand, think that these are their teachings. This is our error. We are the ones who have discarded these teachings. We have discarded them to such a degree that in our minds we have ceased to recognise them as our own teachings! These teachings have become so foreign to us that when we see them practising on these we think that these are their teachings. Indeed not. These are not the teachings of the English but our teachings.

To continue: The British governor and his entourage entered after obtaining permission. They sat down. They did not understand Urdú.

Nevertheless, they sat down. There are some people of good temperaments: they hear nothing – the sound comes to the ears but they understand nothing. Nevertheless, they find delight in sitting there. The gaze of the English is on materialism only, not on spiritual matters. Just as one finds people worshipping the sun, these are worshippers of materialism. They hold no value to spiritual matters.

They saw that Sháh Abdul Qader Sáhib was well-dressed. They also noticed that the place was well-furnished. On the other hand, they saw no activity that could be a source of income. They asked Sháh Sáhib: "From where do you eat?" Sháh Sáhib did not give any reply. He kept silent.

The British visitors sat for a while and then got up to leave. As they were about to leave, the governor brought out a satchel and took out some rupees from it. In those days the currency consisted of silver coins. He kept these in his palm and presented them to Sháh Sáhib and said, in his language: "My heart desires that you accept this as a gift." Sháh Sáhib immediately took the coins from his palm and said: "This is how we eat!"

By this statement Sháh Sáhib was actually conveying the following message: "Despite the fact that you are not a co-religionist of mine, that you are not related to me, that I am not your ustád and that you are not my student, that I am not your pír and that you are not my muríd yet, despite all this, you are giving me a monetary gift. And I have not asked you. This is how I eat, that Alláh Ta'álá had instilled it in your heart to give me. You gave the money and I took it."

So, what is the reason for doing other work when he was involved in the task allocated to him by Alláh Ta'álá? Alláh Ta'álá Himself will make the arrangements. Therefore, what need is there to go out and earn?

Do you understand?

Take another illustration from the legal aspect: A person is in government employment. He may be a simple clerk. We will not consider the higher positions of commissioner and so forth. This government official, the clerk, now wants to go into business. The law is that he cannot do so in his own name. If he were to do so, and the government comes to find out, he will be dismissed. Fired! The government will say: "When you are working for us, and you are being paid by us, why do you go and do some other work?

If you do some other work, then there will be negligence of the work we have given you."

So, the rule is that if a government employee, after having being given certain tasks to perform by the government, goes into some personal venture which the government does not approve of, he will be dismissed immediately. Similarly, if a person is involved in the tasks given to him by Alláh Ta'álá, how can he do some other work?

Do you understand?

So, those ahlulláh who are not involved in farming, trade, employment and other means of worldly earnings, cannot be criticised. Just as you had praised the employee who refused the offer of twenty rupees and was content with ten rupees and you called him a man of valour, you are now calling those 'ulemá who are turning away from worldly allure, to dedicate themselves to the tasks allocated to them by Alláh Ta'álá, as weak-kneed and spineless! The loyal employee is called a man of courage and the loyal 'ulemá are labelled as cowards! Why do you not call them brave and courageous?

Do you understand? I have given you two worldly illustrations, one of a government employee and the other of an ordinary employee. That is why it cannot be shown, with certain exceptions, that those whose status as true walís has been proved according to the laws of the Sharí'ah and the rights of the sharah, that they were involved in farming, trade or employment. Yet, they ate better than those that eat well. A good example is Hadhrat Sháh Abdul Qádir Jilání رحمة الله عليه: Did he work for anybody?

Take also Hadhrat Mauláná Rashid Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه. We heard this from Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه: In Saháranpúr there is a fort belonging to some nawábs, famously known as "The Fort". One of the nawábs from there sent a message to the father of Hadhrat Mauláná Rashid Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه that he needed somebody to teach his children. Would he not ask his son to accept this position? Hadhrat Mauláná Rashid Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه had just qualified as an 'álim. His father requested him to accept this position. He initially declined, but then accepted. He went to Saháranpúr and taught there for a few months. However, he felt unsettled. His heart was not in doing this and he returned home. This happened soon after

qualifying. He did not incline towards becoming a mudarris anywhere. For the rest of his life he did not carry out any farming, trade or employment. Yet, he ate better than those who eat well, and he dressed better than those who dress well.

Take also our Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه: He was a mudarris for a while in Kánpúr: His ustád, Mauláná Yáqub Nánotwí رحمة الله عليه was a very affectionate ustád and he had sent him there to become head of department (sadr mudarris) at the age of twenty. When he left there, he came to stay in Thánah Bhawan where he remained for the rest of his life. This was according to the instruction of Hájí Imdádulláhرحمة الله عليه who had told him: "When your heart feels disquieted in Kánpúr and you leave there, do not attach yourself to any other place. Go and sit in the khánqáh in Thánah Bhawan, tawakkullan-alalláh."

Despite being in debt, Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه left. Initially, there were tests and trials, so much so that he had nothing. When visitors came, they were served whatever was available and husband and wife went to bed hungry. When Alláh Ta'álá saw him succeeding in making sabr, the roads that opened were such that even kings have not been blessed with such. He attained a very elevated stage. Alláhu-Akbar!

Once, so much came that Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه got frightened. "What must I do with all this?" he stated anxiously. They had no children and they were only two, husband and wife. So, he gave away one thousand rupees (of that time) to Deoband and one thousand rupees to Mazáharul-Ulúm in Sahéranpúr. This he did out of fear of possessing so much.

Hadhratwálá's رحمة الله عليه father possessed big tracks of land, which he left behind on his demise. However, Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه took no benefit from these. He took no portion of the inheritance of the lands of his father. As for the debt his father had with regard to the unpaid mehr, he paid out from the share that was due to him, but he took nothing for himself personally from the inheritance of his father. Hadhrat Mauláná Rashid Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه had written to him: "If you take from the inheritance, it is according to fatwá; and if you do not take, it is according to taqwá." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه never took. And he lived with ease and comfort.

In fact, he lived so well that whenever anybody sent a money-order as a

gift to him and wrote a note saying: "Hadhrat, make du'á that Alláh Ta'álá grants barkat and that I have sufficiency in my earnings," he would return the money-order with a note to say: "We do not sell du'ás here."

As I have said, if a government employee is not allowed to do any other work in his own capacity – he may do so in the name of his wife or children – similar is the situation of these personages.

Taqwá comes first and then 'ibádat

Going back to the theme of 'ibádat: An 'ábid is not one who performs merely his five times fardh namáz. An 'ábid is one who performs, besides the five times fardh namáz, an abundance of nafl 'ibádat. In what manner? With taqwá. Why? Because taqwá comes first and 'ibádat comes afterwards. The medical example is that parhez comes first and the medication comes afterwards. If a person is taking his medication but is not making parhez, then of what benefit is it? He would be better off if he does not take medication but observes parhez. Do you understand the point?

Once you have understood the point made, then know that the person who has a passion for 'ibádat, has been given a choice by Alláh Ta'álá. There is no choice with regard to what are fará'idh, which have set laws. So, what is the choice? Look at your ease and look at your strength, then make 'ibádat according to these. Therefore, the Qur'án Sharíf áyet states that stand up in 'ibádat at night. If you are unable to do so for the whole night, then half the night. If unable to do so for half the night, then less than this. However, if one is able to, even more than this. We have been given a choice. We have also been given a lesson in this.

You will find that this súrah, Súrah Muzammil, is Tasawwuf from beginning to end. The 'ábid and the zákir have been a given a choice – either do so much or, if unable to, then so much, but at least so much.

Recite the Qur'án Sharíf in the correct manner

The áyet continues: Recite the Qur'án Sharíf in the correct manner – with tartíl – either in your nafl namáz or out of namáz, while sitting. This time – the time of Tahajjud – is a pleasant and tranquil time of the night. A refreshing breeze is blowing. Get up and recite the Qur'án Sharíf, recite it

with tartíl – that is, recite it by pronouncing the words clearly and fully. The sound of your voice should reach your own ears. There is no need to raise your voice or shout or read very loudly that the eyes of those who are sleeping in the house open. What have they done to you that you read so loudly as to disturb the sleep of these poor people? So, recite in the manner described.

’Ulemá’ should set the example

A lesson has been give to the ’ulemá. This is what we had spoken on before, that the ’ulemá are the representatives of the Rasúl. Every ’álim, beating his chest, proclaims himself to be the Ná’ib of Rasúlulláh صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم. Standing in the mehráb, or whilst sitting on the mimbar, he expounds the virtues of ’ilm most forcefully and then he sleeps through the night! There is ease and he has the time, he has the opportunity, he has the youth, he is not tired from the day’s work, he has the health, he is not ill, but he sleeps throughout the whole night after ’Ishá! Or he sits around after ’Ishá talking. Sitting around and talking is going to cause him to be late. Never mind getting up at night for ’ibádat, but his namáz with jamá’at is also missed. Even if he does not sit around talking and goes to sleep immediately after ’Ishá, he sleeps so deeply that his Fajr namáz with jamá’at is missed. And what does he call himself? A Ná’ib-e-Rasúl! And he lectures on the virtues of ’ilm, that the virtues are such and such!

Remember that Alláh Ta’álá is listening as well as watching.

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ سَمِيْعٌ بَصِيْرٌ ۝

Verily, Alláh is all-hearing, all-knowing. (S.31.28.)

Alláh Ta’álá is listening to what you say and He sees what you are doing. Where the word “’alím” is used, it means that He knows the conditions of your hearts. Where the word “samí” is used, it means that He listens to your talks, how you carry tales about others. Where the word “basír” is used, it means that He sees your actions, how you lie around.

These virtues appear to be for the enemies! Shábásh! Congratulations! Live long! May you have long life.

[These statements are made as a reprimand, using sarcasm. – Tr.]

وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنْفُسَكُمْ

And you yourselves forget (to practise it)? (S.2.44.)

No! These virtues are foremost for you, and then for others. Just see the Hadíth Sharíf on the numerous virtues of Tahajjud. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has given priority, importance and elevation to it over other nafl. These have been taught as well in all the kitábs of Hadíth. All the ten kitábs of Hadíth that are taught have these in them. Yet, with great difficulty the five times namáz are performed!

In the true meaning of the word, it is the 'ulemá who are the true walís, provided that they do the work of a walí and do not involve themselves in other types of work.

So, besides the category of 'aqá'id, which is connected to ímán, we should check ourselves on the other four categories: what is the quality of our 'ibádat? What type of dealings (mu'ámalát) are we engaged in? What are our lifestyles (mu'ásharat) like – are they pure? And what are our characters (akhláq) like? When all these are judged to be correct in the pans of the scale and on the standards laid down, then that person will be an 'álim-e-Rabbání and an 'álim-e-Haqqání. If he has studied in-depth, recognising the reality behind the teachings and if he has developed yaqín with it, then he will act on this knowledge and he will become an 'álim-e-Rabbání as well. So, becoming an 'álim-e-Haqqání comes first and to become an 'álim-e-Rabbání goes with it. Such a person will be an 'ábid.

Nafl 'ibádat – further explanation regarding health

It is to such a person that Alláh Ta'álá is referring when He states: "O 'ábid! I am desirous of your good health. Sound health takes priority over nafl 'ibádat. If you have made nafl 'ibádat in such a manner that it has affected your health, then you have done wrong. You will be called to account for it: Why did you perform nafl 'ibádat in such a manner, to such an extent that your health has suffered, so that you did not remain capable of performing your fardh 'ibádat correctly and with the tranquillity demanded of it? I will call you to account on this. I did give you a choice and I did tell you that mere laziness will not be an excuse for leaving out nafl.

"However, if you have valid Shar'í excuses – illness affecting you; physical weakness overtaking you; being unduly tired because of working; or being on a journey – and you leave out what is nafl, fine, you have permission. At the same time, being in these situations, in carrying out your schedule of 'ibádat, neither is illness a barrier, nor will the illness get worse, nor is tiredness a barrier, nor is weakness a barrier, nor is the journey a barrier, then it is a matter of courage to carry on. You will not be called to account for not carrying out what is nafl. However, you being an 'ábid and you, O 'ábid, have muhabbat for Me, and the demands of muhabbat are that, unless there are some very special circumstances which present themselves, you will persist."

The demands of muhabbat are such that the 'ábid, even in the face of not being commanded to do something by the Mahbúb, and even being told not to do that particular thing – this prohibition not being a command, that if you do it you will be punished, but it being a suggestion made for the welfare of the 'ábid – the 'ábid will still carry out that task.

Do you understand?

The wisdom behind two opposing advices

On what basis is this stated? The proof is in a Hadíth Sharíf: A sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه came and said: "O Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم! I intend going on a journey. Should I fast or should I not fast?" Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم replied: "Is it a good thing to fast whilst on a journey?" The reply was given in such a tone as to discourage him from fasting. He did not fast.

At another time another sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه came to Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم and asked: "O Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم! I intend going on a journey. Should I fast or not?" Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم replied: "Why should you not fast?" This time the tone was such that he should fast. On the previous occasion the tone was such that the sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه should not keep.

This appears to be confusing. Both men were intending the same type of activity. The one is told not to fast and the other is told to fast. In other words, one is instructed not to carry out an injunction and the other is told to carry out an injunction. Has the mas'alah been established?

Now, the reason for the differing answers: The first person was an old

person, physically weak, going on a journey. He was told that it was not a good thing to fast, so that he does not fast. The second person was a young person and he was told that there was no reason why he should not fast, so that he should fast. Do you now understand?

When the Sharí'at has considered us on every occasion and every circumstance, then why do we, on our own, come up with lame excuses? We fail to realise that these lame excuses may fool the creation but will not work with Alláh Ta'álá. These lame excuses are not acceptable.

One excuse is: "I am very tired." What makes you so tired? Were you ploughing the fields? Were you grinding a millstone? Were you hawking, trudging the whole day selling clothes from door to door? What have you really done? Why are you tired? You are young. Why did you not get up for Tahajjud? Why did you not sit up and go make wudhú? Why did you not perform your Tahajjud? Have you not read Súrah Muzammil? You kept on sleeping?

These topics are mentioned because you are a tálib – you are a seeker. You are showing your quest by your behaviour. That is why these matters are told to you. What is the reason for this illness of laziness? This is also an illness.

So, when there are no valid excuses, then laziness should be discarded. Laziness and Sulúk do not go together. Talab and laziness cannot co-exist. Talab and alertness can go together. Talab and courage can co-exist. Talab and laziness cannot co-exist Why this laziness then? How can you deceive yourself? How can you deceive your sheikh? How can you make lame excuses?

That is why Mauláná Rúmí has said:

You can present falsehood to the creation a truth,

But it can never happen that you can show falsehood as truth to the Creator.

He has given a warning.

We had originally said that Dín has two parts: manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá. Manhí-anhá is not to go near those actions from which you have been forbidden. Abstain from them. Ma'múr-bihá – fulfil these tasks fully

and completely. This is a command. A command can be in the category of wájib or it can be in the category of mustahab. What is wájib you have compulsorily to carry out. There is no question of omitting these. Namáz is in this category: you have to perform namáz, even it be by means of signs and the lifting of your head only, if you are so ill. If you are unable to stand, or even to sit, then lie down and perform your namáz by movements of the head, lifting it forward slightly for the rukú' and a bit more for the sajdah. Then, how can one make lame excuses?

'Ishq – passionate love

Whether the order is in the category of wájib or mustahab, you have a greater responsibility, seeing that you are one of the muhibbín, with regard to whom Alláh Ta'álá states:

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْآ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلّٰهِ ؕ

Those who believe are passionate in their love for Alláh. (S.2.165.)

Alláh Ta'álá is stating that the mu'min has passionate love for Alláh Ta'álá. Does "shiddate-muhabbat" mean little or superficial muhabbat? No. "Shiddat" refers to an intense love, what is called "'ishq". From this we can see that the noble status of a mu'min is that he should live the life of an 'áshiq of Alláh Ta'álá. Is that not so? This is what Alláh Ta'álá is saying: that person who is a mu'min should be very passionate in his love for Alláh Ta'álá. Alláh Ta'álá is not using the word "shadíd" but He uses the term "ashadd-e-muhabbat". "Ashadd-e-muhabbat" is in the superlative. That is, not just "intense" but "very intense". When muhabbat increases very much then it is called 'ishq (passion).

In the worldly situation (that is, where a man loves a woman) you find that this person is then restless day and night because of his muhabbat. He finds it difficult to eat even a piece of rotí. When he dreams, it is about her; when he speaks it is about her. Do you understand the point?

So, the mu'min should be an 'áshiqe-Iláhí. Now, will an 'áshiq search for excuses? Will he say, with regard to an instruction: "Is it necessary to carry it out"? Will such a thought come into his mind? It will never enter his mind. On the contrary, the 'áshiq will try and see where his gaze falls.

He will try and fathom what his features are implying. Take this worldly example: The facial expression of the mehbúb indicates that he is thirsty. So, the 'áshiq will quickly bring some water, although he was not instructed to do so. "How did you know that I was thirsty?" He replies: "Your parched lips told me so." He is congratulated on his alertness.

The demand of 'ishq is to be obedient

So, the 'áshiq looks at the wishes of the mehbúb. In the face of an instruction given to him, can he ignore it? Can he then ask: "Is this necessary or unnecessary? Is it necessary to obey your command or is it not necessary?" He claims to have muhabbat and yet asks for an explanation of an order given to him.

It is for this reason that Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه used to feel upset and expel people. One day a person came and asked something of Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه who replied: "Ofo, it is a sin! Dear brother, what you are asking – what you want to do – is sinful." This person then asked: "Is it a minor sin or a major sin?" At this Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه became annoyed and said: "What you are implying is that if it is a minor sin, you will do it. Have you no shame? You have the gall to say that you will do it if it is a minor sin? Have you no honour? Get up from in front of me and be away from here!"

This was said because of the importance of the honour of the Dín. This person was expelled from there.

How can there be such a question when there is ashadd-e-muhabbat? How can a person put forward such a question when he has 'ishq? If, on his own, he is ready to carry out the task, and if the task is an ordinary matter, the mehbúb himself will see that the person is prepared to carry out the task on him asking him, but he may not be able to do so because of physical weakness, so he himself will say: "Come! Sit down. I am not that thirsty. Come! Sit!" He is now being considerate to him. He merely wanted to see if he was prepared to bring him some water to drink. However, when he saw that he was a frail person, he stopped him.

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه had expelled the person mentioned above, from the khánqáh. Now take another situation: Another person had made some error. Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه told him: "Leave the majlis!" This person stood up

and started walking to the stairs leading out of the khánqáh. Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه called out to him in a stern voice: "Where are you going in that direction? Why don't you sit in the masjid here?" The masjid is situated adjacent to the majliskhánah. So, on the one hand he is told to leave and, at the same time, he is prevented from leaving. Hadhratwálá understood what type of person he was, and he understood what type of person the other one was who was actually expelled. The sheikh will himself be considerate. The reason is that the sheikh portrays the qualities of Alláh Ta'álá. Alláh Ta'álá Himself is considerate of you. If you do not take into consideration His thoughtfulness, then there will be nothing left.

Manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá – further elucidation

We were discussing manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá. We had said that manhí-anhá comes first and that ma'múr-bihá comes afterwards. The meaning of ma'múr-bihá is that as far as huqúqs are concerned, besides what is fardh, wájib and sunnate-mu'qqidah, the rest of the orders come afterwards. As for the manhí-anhá: these may be related to taqwá at the lowest level or related to taqwá at the highest level. Both these levels of taqwá have to be achieved. However, you cannot attain the higher levels of taqwá of manhí-anhá until, slowly, slowly, you have not attained the lowest levels of taqwá of manhí-anhá.

The reason is that your temperament is one of freedom, of being unrestricted. Now that you have come here for your isláh, firstly, be kind enough to leave off now the minor sins and attend to the major sins later on. Degree by degree, these also will be discarded, and so forth. And become like that peasant whose qissah I am about to relate.

A qissah of the taubah of the peasant taking heroin

The peasant, when he became bai'at, Hadhrat Mauláná Rashid Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه, got him to make taubah of all his sins. At that time he had the habit of taking opium. He told Mauláná Gangohí رحمة الله عليه: "But you did not make me make taubah from taking opium." Mauláná asked him: "Do you take opium?" He replied: "Yes, I do." Mauláná asked him: "Very well. How much do you take daily?" He mentioned the amount. Mauláná then

told him to take a little bit less every day. The peasant left.

After a few days he was back and presented Mauláná with a gift. Mauláná Gangohí رحمة الله عليه was blind at that stage of his life. He accepted the gift. The peasant then said: "Molvíjí! You have taken the gift but you did not ask me where I got it from." Mauláná Gangohí رحمة الله عليه said: "Very well. Tell me." The peasant said: "I used to take opium and you advised me to decrease the amounts daily. I thought to myself: 'My pír's purpose in doing this is to make me give it up.' So, molvíjí, I understood that my pír wanted me to give it up. What did I become bai'at for? I realised that my pírjí was being considerate to me by getting me to decrease the amounts gradually. So, I went home and destroyed all the opium I had. I stopped taking opium. My nafs then told me: 'You have done an excellent thing by curing this illness! You can now save a lot of money.' I thought about it and I concluded that the illness of taking opium had gone, but the illness of miserliness has replaced it, that I will save some money now! So, I collected the money I would have spent daily on opium. This is the money that I have collected over these few days and brought as a gift for you." Mauláná Gangohí رحمة الله عليه congratulated him: "Má-shá-Alláh! You have shown great courage! You have worked with sagacity." Where will a person habituated to such a drug leave it?

Do you see the quality of the peasant? In contrast, over here, those of you who are learning 'ilm, who should have full yaqín, and have entered the silsilah on top of it, and you have even made a firm promise at the time of becoming bai'at, but you are where you were. This is the result of being unrestricted.

Alláh Ta'álá is stating that He is showing consideration towards you. The purpose is that major sins should be discarded completely and that the process of stopping minor sins should commence. You have made taubah on major sins. So, do not commit major sins. What is the meaning of going near them?

If you have stopped doing what is mustahab, then today you will stop doing what is sunnat, tomorrow you will stop doing what is wájib and the following day you will stop doing what is fardh. This is the sequence of events.

So, manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá are two categories of the Dín. When a person is performing both with perfection, then it will be said that he is involved in the work of Dín. However, if a person takes on ma'múr-bihá but pays no attention to what is manhí-anhá, then how can a person become díndár by him just taking up one portion?

Nafí-ithbát – negation & affirmation – explained further

Right at the beginning I had said that taqwá comes first and 'ibádat comes afterwards, just like parhez comes first and medication comes afterwards. Both manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá are present in detail in the comprehensive and detailed Sharí'at. I had also said that both these categories are to be found in the Kalimah Sharíf. Both manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá are to be found in the Kalimah Sharíf. In what way? In the following manner: "Lá-iláha" is nafí and "illalláh" is ithbát. In the nafí that is in "Lá-iláha" all items that are forbidden, have been included. In "illalláh" is ithbát and includes all those items that we are ordered to do. So, "Lá-iláha" has in it manhí-anhá, and "illalláh" has in it ma'múr-bihá.

Do you understand the points made?

However, these are in concise forms, without details. Then come the detailed explanations, and these are contained in Muhammadur Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has given the details of "Lá-iláha" and also of "illalláh" – he has narrated in detail what is manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá.

Now, all of you do me the favour, as far as manhí-anhá is concerned, do not go into the details of whether it is makrúh-tanzíhí or makrúh-tahrímí, or whether it is mushtabah or harám. Do not go into these details. Know that it is in the category of manhí-anhá. Why do you want to go into the question of whether it is harám or whether it is makrúh-tahrímí or whether it is makrúh-tanzíhí or whether it is mushtabah or whether it is khiláfe-aulá. Why not? The reason is that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had also explained what mushtabah is.

Abstain from that which is doubtful

اَلْحَلَالُ بَيِّنٌ وَالْحَرَامُ بَيِّنٌ وَبَيْنَهُمَا مُشْتَبِهَاتٌ فَاسْتَنْزِهُوْا مِنَ الْمُشْتَبِهَاتِ

This is the full Hadíth Sharíf that is read in Bukhárí Sharíf and taught from it. It means that what is obviously halál is clear. There is no need to query it. Similarly, what is obviously harám is also clear. What is the need to ask about it? Abstain from it.

Between the two is what is doubtful – mushtabah. From certain circumstances and signs it appears that it may be halál yet, from other circumstances and signs it appears to be harám. This is now doubtful – it is in the category of mushtabah.

Abstain from such doubtful items and, having left such doubtful items, cleanse your ímán. This is the meaning of "istanzihu". Remove the grime and dirt from your ímán. Make your ímán pure, so that no dirt and grime remain.

"Muhammadur-Rasúlulláh" صلى الله عليه وسلم is the clear, full and detailed explanation and commentary of "Lá-iláha-illalláh". Whoever does not comply with this but adopts only "Lá-iláha-illalláh" is astray – away from the straight path. Shaitán will be standing with him all the time. The ruses of the nafs will accompany him all the time. This person's ímán will be defective and grossly deficient. Further, if he refutes it, then his ímán has gone!

So, Kitábulláh and the Hadíth Sharíf of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, taken together, comprise the complete Dín. Do you understand? The full Sharí'ah is the detailed explanation of "Lá-iláha-illalláh", with manhí-anhá depicting "Lá-iláha" and ma'múr-bihá depicting "illalláh".

So, to take only one aspect, what kind of justice is it? It would be contrary to justice and contrary to taqwá. It would be contrary to parhez. There will be no special benefit derived. It is like taking medication but not abstaining from harmful foods – there will be no special benefit. If a person observes parhez and he does not take any medication, there will be some benefit. But if he makes parhez and takes the medication, then – subhánalláh! – the benefit will be great.

Say that he observes ma'múr-bihá and also abstains from manhí-anhá. As for the ma'múr-bihá, he does not leave out even what is mustahab and, as for the manhí-anhá, he abstains from what is mushtabah as well. Such a person, observing the ma'múr-bihá and abstaining from the manhí-anhá

as described, will be called a walí. He will be a walí of Alláh Ta'álá. He will be a muttaqí.

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللهَ

O you who believe! Fear Alláh as He should be feared.

By this Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "O you believers! Having discarded kufr and shierk – these being major acts of parhez – and with the ímán and taqwá that you have adopted, you have become mu'min, but see here, I am explaining to you that you have taken on a great burden on your head. After adopting this taqwá, certain laws of Alláh Ta'álá are incumbent on you to follow. Now you have to be constantly in fear of contravening these laws. You have now become Mine." What a nice thing Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "You have now become Mine. My name is Mu'min and your name is also mu'min. Your responsibility has increased. Therefore, I am telling you that you should honour the name you have – you should take your name into consideration. Therefore, as for the commands that this mu'min has to observe and which come from that Mu'min, take precautions not to contravene them. Be fearful. Be vigilant. Be safeguarded. It should not be that you are neglectful and your ímán is snatched away."

This is what Alláh Ta'álá is saying concerning taqwá, addressing the believers. The áyet goes on:

حَقَّ تُقٰتِهٖ

As He should be feared

Have fear as is the haqq of being fearful – in a full manner. It should not be that some aspect of taqwá is adopted and some aspect is left off. It should not be that some portion of the Qur'án Sharíf is taken and some portion is left off. This taqwá is deficient and may even be greatly defective at times.

وَلَا تَمُوْتُنَّ اِلَّا وَاَنْتُمْ مُّسْلِمُوْنَ ۝

And die not save as those who have surrendered (unto Him.). (S.3.102.)

Until death. This right of taqwá has to be adopted till the time of death.

What is of credence is what happens in the end. It must not be that in the beginning you enthusiastically adopt taqwá and leave it in the end. What is of value is what happens in the end and not what happened in the beginning.

It would have been a better situation where that you may not have had taqwá in the beginning, but ended with taqwá. In this situation the taqwá that developed afterwards would counteract and compensate the lack of taqwá in the beginning. What took place initially will not be taken into account and what happened in the end will be counted by Alláh Ta'álá. The ending is taken into account. Therefore, until death.

Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "Those anti-taqwá deeds that you had performed before adopting taqwá, do no even think of them that I did such and such. Do not remember them. Have hope. I have already told you that, seeing that you have counter-acted and compensated for the deficiencies, I will not hold you accountable for them. When there is no accountability by Me, then why is there regret for them? Why do you grieve? Why do you ponder over them? You are now deliberately hitting your foot with an axe. I have taken the axe from your hand, but you have snatched it back from me! Why do that?"

The grace and muhabbat of Alláh Ta'álá – a qissah

Let me relate a qissah concerning the muhabbat of Alláh Ta'álá:

The bondsman mu'min of Alláh Ta'álá made wudhú and proceeded to the masjid to perform namáz. This is what should be done – make wudhú at home and then proceed to the court of Alláh Ta'álá. Now, before this, the bandah had committed some sin. Having made wudhú he was now proceeding to the masjid, to the court of Alláh Ta'álá to make salám to Alláh Ta'álá.

The method of making salám to Alláh Ta'álá is different for the different times – in the morning it is one way, just after noon it is another, later it is different, after sunset it is different, at night it is different and in the last portion of the night it is different. These are all methods for making salám.

So, this bandah was proceeding along and arrived at the door of the court

of Alláh Ta'álá – that is, the door of the masjid. Remember that he had committed some sin prior to this and he had not made taubah. He was carrying this impurity of his sin together with some purity of his wudhú. However, at the entrance was standing an angel. This one is a different one from the Kiráman-Kátibín – the C.I.Ds – who are with us all the time and whom we should be conscious of.

So, this angel wanted to stop the bandah from entering. He said to Alláh Ta'álá: "He is coming in with some impurity into Your Royal court. How can I let him enter in this condition?"

What I am relating is the substance of a Hadíth Sharíf.

Alláh Ta'álá told him: "Well, lift the impurity off him. He will then be pák. Then he will be able to enter." The angel followed the instruction and lifted the impurity of his sin off him.

The bandah entered the masjid and performed namáz, after which he went outside. The angel asked Alláh Ta'álá: "Shall I replace the impurity I had lifted off him?" Alláh Ta'álá replied: "Seeing that I had instructed you to lift it off, how can the question of replacing it arise? Throw it away!"

What a great thing! How great is the karam of Alláh Ta'álá on the mu'min! Take this illustration: The child's feet were dirty and grimy. He should have taken some warm water and a brush and scrubbed them himself, but he did not do so. His mother then washed the child's feet with the warm water. Actually, it would have been better if he had washed them himself, but he was unconcerned. Similarly, in the above situation it is Alláh Ta'álá who is washing away the sins of the person going to the masjid to perform his namáz.

Is this not something to ponder over? Is it not being considerate? How much is Alláh Ta'álá not desirous of the mu'min bandah! Excuse upon excuse! Excuse upon excuse! Alláh Ta'álá is removing the filth and grime. Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "When he comes to Me, he should not even see the face of Jahannam. Never mind going into Jahannam, he should not see even the face of Jahannam."

What is it that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, whom Alláh Ta'álá has sent, said? He explained: "You are flying into the fire like flying insects rushing into a fire. In the same manner you are rushing into the fire of Jahannam, and I am

trying to save you with both my hands, but you are forcefully overcoming me. What a sad state you are in!" This demonstrates Rasúlulláh's صلى الله عليه وسلم affection and muhabbat.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is not only the ambassador and not one who merely brought a message, but he is one who sacrificed himself for the welfare of the ummat. He stood up at night to beg for forgiveness for the ummat. Yet you are overpowering him. Just look at his muhabbat, that of Rahmatul-'álimín; and look also at the muhabbat of Arhamur-Ráhimín. Measure according to these two, Alláh Ta'álá and our Nabí صلى الله عليه وسلم. As for us? We show no remorse. Never mind making 'ibádat in abundance, we cannot manage even the five fardh namáz.

A certain poet has put this very well. This poetry should be memorised and remembered all the time. The poetry is in Farsi. The translation of it is:

Look at the karam (grace) and lutf (favour) of Alláh Ta'álá,

That the bandah commits the sin but He feels ashamed!

What a severe statement! In order to understand it, take the following illustration: When it is the child who commits an unseemly act, it is the father who feels ashamed. Is this not so? The guilty person is the child but it is the father who feels ashamed.

Alláh Ta'álá has much greater affection for the mu'min bandah than a father for his son. So, when the bandah commits some unseemly act, Alláh Ta'álá feels ashamed. The poet says, in the words of Alláh Ta'álá: "Just look at My karam. You are the one who has committed a sin, but I am the one who feels ashamed."

It is as if to say: "Having become one of Mine, is this your behaviour? Being My son, is this what you are up to? You have besmirched the name of your family. Even if you cannot maintain a good reputation for My sake, at least do not create a slur on your name. How could you do it?"

Alláh Ta'álá has explained it in our terminology that we would understand: "Just look at My karam, at My benevolence. You are the one who has committed a sin but I am the one who feels ashamed. You should ponder over this yourselves, that if your child were to behave in an unseemly manner, what emotions would pass through you at that moment. So, you, being a mu'min – that is, metaphorically a son of Mine – were you to do

something unseemly will I not be affected? Ponder."

"You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman." – a qissah

On this, Hadhratwálá placed in our ears the story of one person. This is also worthy of memorising. Just as I had said that the poetry mentioned earlier is worthy of being remembered, this is also worthy of being memorised and kept in mind all the time. Its awareness should be there all the time and brought forth immediately. What is the incident? It is the following:

There was a buzurg sitting on the steps of the Jámi'ah Masjid in Delhi. He was saying loudly: "You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman, so why should I obey your commands?"

The people walking past him heard him and condemned him for his statement. "He has gone mad, completely mad," said some. Others said: "He has become a káfir – he has turned away from Islám." Others said: "This is shierk. He has become a mushrik." Others again said: "He is a munáfiq." Those passing by kept on making similar comments.

One person came and stood by him and listened attentively to him. After a while he addressed the buzurg and asked: "Mi'yán, what are you saying and to whom are you speaking?" The buzurg laughed and said: "All of the people of Delhi who passed by here are idiots. As they passed by, some said one thing and others another. Mad, insane, káfir, munáfiq, mushrik – each one had a comment to make. You have turned out to be intelligent. You decided to enquire before passing judgement. Listen! I am addressing my nafs. My nafs has been vexing me for some time now. My nafs is telling me: 'Feed me some halva.' How shall I feed it halva, seeing I have no money? Shall I steal some? Shall I get some by defrauding the shopkeeper? Shall I go out and beg just to feed it halva? So, I am telling my nafs: 'You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman, so, why should I obey your commands?'"

The real culprit is nafs and not Shaitán

This qissah was related to us by Hadhratwálá. What an amazing incident! Is that not so? Remember that the original culprit is not Shaitán. Shaitán only lends support. The original wrongdoer is nafs. The proof is there. Before

Shaitán became Shaitán, was there a Shaitán to mislead him? Can you show me? So, how did Shaitán become corrupt? What was there? It was nafs!

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُوْرَهَا وَتَقْوٰهَا ۝

And inspired it (with conscience of) what is wrong for it and (what is) right for it. (S.91.8.)

Fujúr (transgression) became dominant. It was lying hidden in the nafs. Shaitán had the fujúr of kibr, which is the root of kufr.

Kibr is the root of kufr. Why did he not bring ímán ? It was because of kibr. Did he not know? Was he ignorant? Not at all. He was well aware. But Shaitán had developed kibr. He became proud of his 'ilm. He was boastful of his 'ibádat. He forgot who was giving the command to prostrate. He justified his action by saying: "Have I not seen that Adam was created from sand, whereas I was created from fire? How can I bow down to him?" Kibr manifested in his nafs.

So, it is apparent the primary culprit is nafs and not Shaitán, who merely lends support. That is why the buzurg said that it was his nafs that demanded to eat halva. Is eating halva harám? Is it ná-pák? Of course not. What sin would he have been committed by eating halva? None, whatsoever.

On the other hand, is eating halva wájib? It is neither compulsory, nor sunnat, nor mustahab. It is eaten merely to fill one's stomach. So, seeing that the eating of halva has no status in the Sharí'ah, where is it permissible to beg to obtain halva? Not at all. Do you understand the point made?

To beg is disgraceful

This is a Hadíth Sharíf:

اَلسُّؤَالُ ذِلٌّ

To ask (beg) is disgraceful.

The hearts of the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم were extremely strong. They even abstained from such actions that were completely permissible, but refrained from them based on their external meanings. Take the following incident:

One sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه was riding on his horse. He had a small whip in

his hand. The whip fell out of his hand to the ground. He climbed off his horse to pick up the whip. There was another sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه who was walking nearby, who saw his action and came up to him and said: "Hadhrat, why did you go to all the trouble of climbing off to pick up the whip? I was nearby. You should have asked me. It would not have been much of an effort on my part to walk over and pick up the whip and hand it to you." The first sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه replied: "Our Habíb had forbidden us to ask. So, if I were to request you, then it would be asking, and asking is disgraceful. If I can do my own work myself, why should I ask others?"

This was their temperament.

The Hadíth Sharíf says that to ask is disgraceful. Therefore, just as it is harám to steal or defraud for the sake of eating halva, it is also harám to beg. There are special and dire circumstances, when three days have passed without having anything to eat and one's life is at stake, then Alláh Ta'álá Himself has given permission. In this situation it would be permissible to eat even carrion. So, eating by begging in this situation would be permissible even more so. However, until this dire situation has not arisen, how can one ask? How can one beg? The sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه provided the example.

The buzurg explained: "Eating halva is not forbidden, but the manner of obtaining it is forbidden. So, should I listen to my nafs and go out to beg from others just to feed it halva? What a disgraceful thing to do! The mouth will have tasted something sweet, but I would have been humiliated by begging."

The lesson to be remembered from this is that the enjoyment that leads to disgrace, that enjoyment should be refrained from, even though that enjoyment is in the category of being mubah. Tasting bitterness after having tasted something sweet is to be avoided. Yes, to have something sweet after having eaten something bitter is fine.

Physical illnesses and illnesses of the nafs

Take an illustration: Medicines, mostly, are traditionally bitter. They also emit an unpleasant odour However, in order to cure an illness and attain good health, it is necessary to take that bitter medicine. In a similar manner, if something is prescribed, something that is burdensome and heavy, in

order to cure the illnesses of the nafs, why should this remedy not be taken as one would take bitter medicine to cure a physical illness?

There is an important difference between the two illnesses. If a person dies with a physical illness, there will be no consequences for him after death. However, the illnesses of the nafs are such that, if a person were to die while still afflicted with these illnesses, it is not the end of the problem, but he will experience the consequences after death. A person may suffer from a physical illness while in this world, but this physical suffering will come to an end at the time of death. On the other hand, a person may not feel the effects of illnesses of the nafs in this world – he may suffer no pains from them – but he will experience the effects after death if he were to die with them. So, which illnesses are more serious amd more to be concerned about? Definitely, the illnesses of the nafs are more serious and not physical illnesses.

Yet, we see how much thought and effort is put into curing physical illnesses, but there is no concern about the illnesses of the nafs. A person will take bitter medicines, tolerating their malodour, to cure his physical illness, but he is unconcerned about curing the illnesses of his nafs, even though the medication here is not as bitter. The reason is that the person's temperament is one of freedom, and that is why he considers this medication to be bitter.

As I was saying, the primary culprit is the nafs and not Shaitán. People blame Shaitán for nothing. That is why that buzurg, who was sitting on the steps of the Jamiah Masjid in Delhi, was saying: "You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman, so why should I obey your command?" People who heard him were shocked and made various comments. "What kind of a buzurg is he? Just listen to what he is saying!" However, when his statement was queried and the explanation was given and the situation explained, the people came to realise that there was no doubt about his being a buzurg. In fact, he was a great buzurg, opposing his nafs in its (unacceptable) desire to eat halva.

Is this qissah not worth remembering? Our Sheikh, Hadhrat Thánwí رحمة الله عليه. related it to us.

So, memorise the poetry quoted above and keep it in mind, and keep the

statement of this buzurg in front of you and, insha-Alláh Ta'álá, if not all at once, but slowly and steadily, with the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá, a time will come when you will be able to save yourselves from contravening the commands of Alláh Ta'álá.

There are some with courage who, while sitting here and before getting up, will have resolved to act accordingly and will be saved. For such, one majlis is sufficient, with the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá. The reason is that, while sitting here, they make an intention with sincerity. Assistance will come from there. How will this assistance come? In the following manner:

Reaching Alláh Ta'álá – a qissah

We heard this from Hadhratwálá. After all, we are from there! We had handed ourselves into his hand, the hand of the sheikh, and sold ourselves into the hand of Alláh Ta'álá. But the world is a place where means have to be adopted.

So, what did Hadhratwálá relate to us? He used to explain by means of stories, incidents and examples and illustrations so that very complex and heavy material used to just flow into our hearts.

He said: "Sálikín are involved in attaining wásil-bil-Haqq – a special bond with Alláh Ta'álá. There is nothing special or difficult about this process. Carry on with the effort, carry on. You will reach there. How will you reach there? In the following manner." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه then related the following qissah:

One buzurg was travelling somewhere. While travelling along he happened to pass by the palace of the king. The palace had high walls with the king sitting above, on top of the parapet. From above his eyes fell on the buzurg. The king called down to the buzurg: "Miansáhib! Come here!"

The buzurg said: "You are sitting high up there and I am right down here at the bottom – how can I come up?" The king ordered a kamand to be lowered to him for him to be pulled up. A kamand was like a modern-day lift – a sort of rope with a harness or small platform that was used to lift people on to the parapet from below the wall of the palace or castle. The buzurg sat on it and was pulled up to where the king was.

After saláms and shaking of hands, the king had him seated. The king

then started conversing with him. During the conversation, the king asked: "Mian, how did you reach Alláh Ta'álá?" The buzurg replied: "In the same manner that I reached you!"

This is how Hadhratwálá explained to us. What an amazing and deep concept was explained to us using a simple illustration.

The buzurg explained further: "In the same manner that I have reached you. I was just travelling along in the direction of Alláh Ta'álá and, just as your gaze fell on me, Alláh Ta'álá's gaze fell on me. Now, I was unable to reach Him even though I wanted to reach Him. So, how to reach him? His bounteous gaze fell on me and He said: 'Come to Me.' How could I reach Him? He then pulled me up to Him, just like you had me pulled up to you. My task was to make an effort, to walk along. This I did, making the effort to walk along. This was my duty. To reach the destination was not my duty. When He saw that this individual was walking towards Him and making an effort, and that, without support from Him and taking his hand, he will not manage, He took my hand and pulled me towards Him, just as you pulled me up to be with you."

Hadhratwálá said: "O bondsmen of Alláh! Just see: it is a very easy matter. All you have to do is walk along. Leave aside the thought of whether you have reached or not reached your destination. But do as follows. Do what?

"To find or not to find, You are the Mukhtár;

You should keep on running."

That is, it is in His ikhtiyár for you to find or not to find. It is not your duty. Your task is to keep on going, keep on running. Keep yourself occupied with this concern, with taqwá. That is all. That is your task. As for finding? This will happen, as is His promise. But you remove this from your gaze. Stop being in anticipation of it. Divert your gaze from this and do not be in anticipation of it. Rather, busy yourself in the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá, with taqwá. The fruits you will attain. Why? Because it is His promise.

وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْاٰخِرَةَ وَسَعٰى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولٰٓئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُم مَّشْكُورًا ۝

And whoso desires the hereafter and strives for it with the necessary effort,

being a believer; for (people like) these their efforts find favour (with their Lord).(S.17.19.)

The mu'min has been pulled up. So, leave aside the issue of how or when. You carry on. You have muhabbat, so you should carry on. The fruits you will receive.

Alláh Ta'álá Himself is saying: "Walk towards Me. I will seat you on My lap. This may be beyond your imagination, but you walk towards Me, with taqwá and zikr, then you will see that I will seat you in My lap." In the terminology of the Sufiyah: "Stumbling and falling, in joy and sadness, keep on coming and, just like your mother does not allow you to fall and she takes you into her lap, I will also seat you in My lap."

This is what Alláh Ta'álá has stated through the lips of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم: "That bondsman who walks with sincerity of intention one hand's breadth in My direction, observing the full Sharí'at and following My orders, I will approach him two hands' breadth. That bondsman that comes towards Me one cubit's length, I will approach him in leaps and bounds. And that bondsman that comes towards Me in leaps and bounds, I will also run towards him. And that bondsman that runs towards Me, I will take him into My lap."

You will have seen how a mother will try to encourage her toddler to try and walk. By getting the child to walk on his own, the child will develop strength in his legs and develop the ability to stand on his own. She realises that if she were to carry him in her lap all the time, he will become handicapped and will not be able to walk at all. Similarly, Alláh Ta'álá also wants one to walk on one's own and not always take support from others. When the child walks the mother will watch him closely and the moment she sees his legs starting to buckle, she will quickly rush to take the child into her lap so that the child does not fall.

Similarly with Alláh Ta'álá, that He watches closely as the bondsman walks towards Him. The moment He sees him faltering He will lift him up so that he does not fall. Your duty is to keep on walking, with sincerity of intention, with taqwá and zikr. Wusúl – wásil-bil-Haqq (to be connected to Alláh Ta'álá) – is His duty.

This is the reason the lesson of "Lá-iláha-illalláh Muhammadur-Rasúlulláh" صلى الله عليه وسلم is given. This is the summary of the whole Dín. The whole of the Dín is the commentary of this Kalimah. Both categories, manhí-anhá and ma'múr-bihá, should be acted on in such a manner that manhí-anhá is attained first because it contains in it taqwá, and act on ma'múr-bihá together with it. Even if what is mustahab is left out, there is no real harm done but, if taqwá is left out, there is grave damage. If medication is not taken, there is no great harm, but if there is bid-parhezí, then – may Alláh save us – it should not be that it leads to the demise of the patient.

Yet, what is our condition? We – those who do have some concern – take great care of performing what is mustahab, and we are punctual with our zikr of "Lá-iláha-illalláh", but we have no concern for taqwá.

Hurting others and zikr are contradictory

For example: "Have my words not harmed anybody? Why did I speak in such a manner? Oho! I have hurt his feelings, and he has said so to me as well that his feelings are hurt. So, what type of zikr did my tongue make that it is now causing difficulty to the children of Alláh Ta'álá. So, what result has been attained by this zikr that I am making? What result has been attained by this tasbíh that I am reciting? What result has been attained by this Durúd Sharíf that I am reciting? I am causing taklíf to the ummah of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم and I am causing harm to the bondsmen of Alláh Ta'álá, and, with the same tongue, reciting Durúd of "Muhammadur-Rasúlulláh" صلى الله عليه وسلم and I am making the zikr of "Lá-iláha-illalláh". So, what type of tasbíh am I reciting?"

Recite tasbíh with the intention and the awareness of what you are reciting. Then you will see the effect of it.

If one ponders one will realise, as Alláh Ta'álá himself states in the Qur'án Sharíf with great emphasis, that from the whole of creation, there is not a single creation that is not making the tasbíh of Alláh Ta'álá – the earth, the trees and every created thing is making the tasbíh of Alláh Ta'álá. If you are also making His tasbíh, what great achievement is it when the effect of the tasbíh that should come into you, has not manifested itself? The negation – nafí – of everything that was supposed to come with "Lá-iláha"

has not come. The effects of affirmation – ithbát – that was supposed to have been established within you by "illalláh", has not been established. But, never mind, carry on, carry on. It is better that you carry on than not make zikr at all. However, keep the objective in mind.

Why have you become complacent? Why do you sit back contented? What you should be doing is make progress, move ahead with this tasbíh, with the above intention in mind. Alláh Ta'álá Himself wants you to progress. But you are sitting back complacent, contented with the zikr you are making, satisfied with the Tahajjud you are performing, with the thought that there are no further lessons beyond these. However, you have left off still many lessons.

In quest of dunyá and earning a living

I had digressed onto this topic when I was discussing talab. Talab is of two types, one is of Dín and one is of dunyá. These are two spheres to bear in mind, dunyá and ákhirat. The one in quest of dunyá has been called a dog by Alláh Ta'álá. dunyá has been called carrion. The Hadíth Sharíf states:

اَلدُّنْيَاجِيْفَةٌ وَطَالِبُوْهَا كِلَابٌ

The dunyá is carrion and the ones in quest of it are dogs.

The ones in quest of dunyá are called dogs. In this statement it is apparent that it is not befitting the noble status of a mu'min to be in quest of dunyá. Yes, we have to earn a living. Earning is necessary. But to be in quest in such a manner that there is no thought of halál and no thought of harám, no thought of purity and no thought of avoiding doubtful items? Why this unconcern? The answer is: it is because these are the demands of being in quest. This is the effect of pursuit that no thought is given as to how the objective is achieved. People say: "Brother, as long as the objective is attained, it does not matter whether it is já'iz or ná-já'iz, whether it is halál or harám." This is what being in quest demands.

So, Alláh Ta'álá has, through the words of His Rasúl صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم called dunyá carrion and the one in quest of dunyá is called a dog. The one involved in earning is not referred to as kásib but the act of earning has been referred to as fardh:

طَلَبُ كَسْبِ الْحَلَالِ فَرِيْضَةٌ بَعْدَ الْفَرِيْضَةِ

It is fardh, but after the other fará'idh. It has been made subservient to the Dín. However, we have reversed the order. The subservient has been made the objective and the objective has been made subservient.

So, a mu'min should never bring it to his lips that he is a dunyadár. Just see what Alláh Ta'álá has called a dunyadár. How can such words issue from your lips? Being a mu'min and dunyadár? This can never be!

I was speaking about the buzurg who had a female dog which gave birth to puppies. Do you remember? Many topics have been discussed in-between, but let me get back to the qissah. When the dog gave birth to the puppies the buzurg invited all the well-to-do, rich people to a meal to mark the occasion. Seeing that the buzurg had invited them they all accepted and came. Now, this buzurg had a friend who was also a buzurg. As I had previously mentioned, where there is congeniality of temperaments there one will develop friendship and not at other places. Where the temperaments are similar, there you find people bonding with one another.

It was on the topic of bonding that I spoke about our Tablíghí brothers. Their bonding is there all the time. Whenever they speak on a topic, the tablígh bonding will take place. Whenever there is a lecture, the bonding of tablígh will take place. Whenever they speak, they will be speaking in connection with tablígh. They will not speak on any other topic. Neither in their conversations nor in their lectures will they speak on other topics. Why? The reason is that their temperaments have become fully immersed, in depth, and fully grounded in tablígh. They will also not tolerate any other type of lecture. They will also not tolerate reading any other types of kitábs. This is how much they have attached themselves to tablígh. If they read out a kitáb, it will be the same one, concerning fazá'il and not one of masá'il.

Fazá'il and masá'il

Let me tell you what I heard in England. This I heard with my own ears while I was in England. There was an ijtimá' in a town called Batley, near Dewsbury. There were huge tents erected there for the ijtimá'. I also went to attend. It was on the third day that the jamá'ats which had been tashkíled,

were about to depart.

Towards the end Mauláná Inámul Hassan Sáhib gave a talk. Thereafter, the mauláná from Gujerat, Mauláná Palunpúrí Sáhib, gave some advice as the jamá'ats were about to make musáfahah: "Read out fazá'il and not masá'il." This I heard with my own ears. There were tablíghí friends sitting near me. I turned to them and asked: "What is this that they should read out fazá'il and not masá'il?" They explained: "The Tablíghí jamá'at is composed of people of various schools of thought. By reading out masá'il, there will be dissension. Masá'il differ, so there will be discordance."

Agreed, there will be those belonging to the Hanafí Mazhab, the Shafi'í Mazhab, the Maudúdí group, and so forth. Each will have its own school of thinking. But how can there be differences in discussing masá'il, like the masá'il concerning namáz? Each group will follow its own masá'il. What controversy can there be in this? Yes, there can be problems when discussing masá'il relating to the ahle-bidat and other groups. However, what can be the problem with discussing the masá'il of wudhú, namáz, rozah, and hajj? Yes, there are differences in some masá'il – these do not discuss. There should be no problem in discussing the straightforward masá'il. Nobody will feel offended. What would be the problem in relating three or four mas'alas from the "Behistí Zewar" or "Ta'límul-Islam" or "Ráh-e-Naját"?

What I am relating to you is what I heard with my own ears, that the fazai'il from the compilation of the fazai'il kitáb should be read out and not masá'il. It was on this that I said that they have talab, inclination and engrossment to such a degree that they do not tolerate any lecture of any other type. They do not tolerate the reading out of any other kitáb as well. They have developed such an attachment to it in their temperaments that there is no room for anything else.

Let me carry on with our qissah: The one buzurg felt attached to the other buzurg. However, this other buzurg was not invited by the buzurg who had invited all the rich people to a meal. When the second buzurg realised that he had been left out, he complained to the first buzurg: "What is this? You invited all the others to a meal and you did not invite me? Did you forget me?" The first buzurg replied: "My dog had given birth to some puppies.

To mark the occasion I invited the worldly dogs for the occasion. Whenever my wife gives birth, then I will invite you."

This qissah was related to us by Hadhratwála. He also added: "The buzurg did not look down on them." That is no sheikh who will even contemplate looking down on anybody, leave alone being actually contemptuous of anyone. That is extremely remote. If he should consider himself to be better than others or be contemptuous of others, such a person is not a walí of Alláh Ta'álá. A walí is pure of such attitudes. In fact, he considers himself to be worse than everybody else. On occasions, he also confesses: "I take oath on Alláh Ta'álá that I consider myself to be worse than a dog and a pig even." This humility is not just lip service, but is a true reflection of his inner self. It is not merely "qál" (verbal statement) but it is a "hál" (inner state).

So, why should he call others dogs or cats? The reason is that the wordly people themselves, being Muslim, refer to themselves as such and say: "Arè bháí! We are the dogs of the world." Because this statement came from their lips, the buzurg drove the point home to them in their terminology. He did not make the accusation from his side but he merely illustrated what they themselves had said that they are the dogs of the world.

In actual fact, no Muslim who is referred to as a worldly person is a worldly person. If he is not a worldly person, then how can he be called a dog? Thus, to call oneself a dog of the world, is strictly forbidden.

It is not permissible to belittle one's 'ibádat

As is the case with namáz: If anyone performing namáz says: "What is the worth of my namáz? It is merely a 'namáziah'," then he becomes a sinner. He has belittled namáz. It is lowering the status of namáz. He should rather say: "Alhamdulilláh, with the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá I have performed namáz. I have hope that Alláh Ta'álá will accept my namáz."

A qissah: Hadhratwálá mentioned a qissah: There was a person who used to go and meet an Afghání Pathán buzurg on occasions. Once, when he went to visit him there was another person accompanying him. At the time of making salám and introducing the newcomer, the first person mentioned: "Hadhrat, he is a háfiz as well." The buzurg said: "O, you are a háfiz?" The

háfijí replied: "That is what people say." The buzurg said: "What? That is what people say? Are you not a háfiz? Ingratitude! Ingratitude! Why do you not say: 'Alhamdulilláh, with the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá, I am a háfiz'? Why do you not make shukr? Why say: 'This is what people say'? If somebody were to ask you: 'Can you see with your two eyes?' will you say: 'That is what people say'? Do you not know that you have two eyes?" This is how the buzurg tried to explain to him, that one should live by being a grateful bondsman of Alláh Ta'álá.

Whatever "small" blessing one has, even though it may appear small in your eyes, is a greatest of great ne'mat from Alláh Ta'álá. How can it be considered to be small? And when one is blessed with the great ne'mat of being a háfiz? Afterwards, whenever that particular háfiz visited the buzurg, he was greeted with the nickname of "Ná-shukra" – one showing ingratitude.

One should live as a grateful bondsman of Alláh Ta'álá. The namáz that has been performed, irrespective of how it is performed, yet it has been performed. Compare this with so many who have not performed namáz. So, in comparison with them?

Takabbur – and a warning

But for takabbur to develop, and to look at contempt at those not performing namáz? This is a most evil sin. He has developed humility and I have developed takabbur!

"It is through the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá, shukr-lilláh." This should be one's attitude. One should not cast an eye of contempt on anybody. No matter how much a person has become debased – he is not performing namáz as far as 'ibádat is concerned, and his activities are licentious and you have seen him with your own eyes involved openly in harám and shameless activities – to think yourself better than him and to look down on him is a sin of the highest magnitude. And one should be fearful.

Why? The Hadíth Sharíf states that if you have looked with contempt at somebody and you have not quickly made taubah, your death will not come to you until you do not also land up the same as him. What right have you to look with contempt at anybody? Ponder!

Some ’ibádat is such that it is contaminated with a very subtle type of impurity that the ’ibádat is not qabúl. It is so subtle that the person performing that ’ibádat is unable to detect it. And if he is unaware of it and it is present, then how can that ’ibádat be qabúl? We are discussing isláh – self-rectification – and the therapy for this illness. Is there any certainty of the ’ibádat being accepted? If not, then how can one look with contempt at others? How can one consider oneself to be better?

There is a treatment for this illness. It is sufficient to bear in mind the following possiblility: “This mu’min may have some such quality in him that Alláh Ta’álá loves; and that I may have some such quality in me that Alláh Ta’álá is displeased with. Then, how can I look with contempt at him? What if he is qabúl and I am not?” This is the remedy to prevent takabbur from developing and looking with contempt at others.

The difference between a lecture and a majlis

The mashá’ikh are there to provide treatment. They are the ruhání physicians. In their lectures where they relate various illnesses, quoting Qur’ánic áyát and Hadíth Sharíf, different qissas and so forth, they also relate the remedies to the various illnesses. The individual will see if he is affected by one or several of these illnesses. The majlis that is conducted is similar to a consultation in a physician’s consulting room. Therefore, mention is made of various illnesses. This does not happen in formal lectures. A lecture is normaly delivered on one subject. The lecture will be limited to one theme only. So, the benefit that is attained by attending a majlis is not attained by listening to a lecture.

That is why Hadhratwálá advised towards the end: “Do not deliver lectures. No benefit will be attained from lectures now. When it is announced that a lecture will take place in the masjid, some people will sit down to listen. Some will sit out of politeness, in consideration of the one making the announcement or out of consideration for being a relative. Those who wish to walk away, do so also. Yes, those who come to sit in your majlis, they are fine. They have come with talab. Various topics are discussed in the majlis. Those attending suffer from varying types of illnesses. They have a variety of states afflicting them. So, the varying topics that are discussed

will assist these people. A lecture will not bring about this benefit." That is why, in his wasíyet, Hadhratwálá said: "Compared to my lectures, my malfúzát should be studied to a greater extent. There will be greater benefit in these." This was Hadhratwálá's wasíyet.

Those coming to the majlis should be tálibul-'ilm – seekers of knowledge. They should have an open mind, even though they may not have i'tiqád in the sheikh. They should not have a rebellious attitude or have antagonism. The latter group will leave more corrupted. Alláh Ta'álá knows everything. Alláh Ta'álá will cause them to be corrupted even further.

So, those coming with faith and confidence, or coming with an open mind even though they may not have i'tiqád, both will benefit on leaving here, each according to his potential. Some will benefit quickly and some after some delay.

Summary and du'á

For the tálib, the words spoken here and these falling into the right ears, even one majlis is sufficient. There is something that I had mentioned just now:

The first is the bit of poetry I had recited. Keep it in mind. Let me repeat it:

Look at the karam (grace) and lutf (favour) of Alláh Ta'álá,
That the bandah commits the sin but He feels ashamed!

Secondly, also keep in mind the statement of the buzurg as related by Hadhratwálá: "Why should I obey your orders? You are not my Lord and I am not your bondsman."

For that person who has talab in him and has a temperament which has the capacity to understand, for such a fortunate person just one majlis is sufficient. While sitting here in the majlis, he makes taubah, and he leaves here with a firm resolution, it is apparent that he will traverse three days' manzils in one day. He has developed the enthusiasm – it is as if he is flying in a plane.

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us the taufíq.

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

Khudá háfiz

A BRIEF NOTE ON BROTHER HASSIM BULBULIA رحمة الله عليه

Brother Hassim was born on the 21st of August in the year 1946 in Fordsburg, Johannesburg, South Africa. He was the sixth child out of eight children His early school education commenced in Vrededorp and continued at the Bree Street Primary School in Newtown and the Johannesburg Indian High School in Fordsburg.

His madrasah education, like that of his brothers and many others in those days, was very erratic. There was no punctuality in attendance and no great importance was attached to Díní education. Imám Gasant رحمة الله عليه in Vrededorp was one of his ustáds.

His father took him out of school when he completed Standard Six and he worked as a storeman for a firm in the centre of Johannesburg.

He lived a carefree life in his youth, making a name for himself as a bass guitarist in a music band: "The Hoochee Koochees," that became famous in the whole of South Africa.

It was brother Ebrahim Desai, who was active in the Tablígh Jamá'at, who caused a turn-about in his life in the year 1968/1969. He and brother Hassim were friends from a young age Brother Ebrahim recalls how he was "a pain in the neck" for brother Hassim with his persistence in giving him dáwah. As a result of his coaxing, brother Hassim left the band and got involved in the effort of tablígh. His Díní knowledge, whatever little he had learnt, was very scanty, so he started studying Dín again from the very basics. This he did under Qárí Abdul Hamíd Panoli Sáhib in Kerk Street, where Qárí Sáhib lived behind the masjid.

The next phase in his life started when Háfiz Salloo Sáhib رحمة الله عليه encouraged him to go to India to further his Islámic studies. Thus in 1971 brother Hassim arrived in Jalálábád, India, where he started doing hifz. He decided to come back to South Africa in 1972 just before completing his hifz, in order to get married (1973), and settled in Cape Town, joining the

family business, "Knobbs", in Cape Town. He completed his hifz in Cape Town.

In 1975 brother Hassim himself started teaching Dín to the neighbours' children at his home, assisted by his father-in-law, Moosa Docrat. The number of children increased rapidly and the house became too small to accommodate them. Bigger premises were needed. A new school had just been built in Rylands in 1976, and the principal, Ismail Waja, was approached for use of the classes. He agreed on condition that permission be obtained from another Muslim group which had approached him first. Alhamdulilláh, this permission was forthcoming. This was in 1976. The maktab then grew from strength to strength and other maktabs were opened as well. At the moment of writing, there are now nine such maktabs running with a total of approximately one thousand pupils.

At the same time, brother Hassim kept up with his tablígh activities, going to the old Rhodesia two or three times and going out locally. With the du'ás of Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه brother Hassim also started taping his majális and the lectures of visiting 'ulemá. He also taped the lectures delivered at ijtimás. As a side-line, he also sold topís and kurtas. His stall was noticeable at all ijtimás and jalsas. He left the family business to do business on his own as he felt that this would give him more time to do Díní work.

He influenced many people, his brother Yusuf in particular. He was instrumental in sending Yusuf to Jalálábád in 1974. The following year Yusuf joined him in the running of the maktabs.

Brother Hassim passed away on the 11th July 2006, after a short illness. He is survived by five children, two sons and three daughters. May Alláh Ta'álá fill his qabr with núr.

BOOKLET NUMBER TWENTY

Safar 1430 – February 2009

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh, with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of our Sheikh رحمة الله عليه and the du'ás of our well-wishers, this booklet, For Friends Number Twenty, is being presented to you. Seeing that there was no booklet of "For Friends" published last year in 2008, I have tried to compensate for this by publishing two majális in this issue instead of the normal one.

Both these majális were held in Jalálábád and they were held in Shábán and Ramadhán 1412, corresponding with the year 1992. The significance of this year is that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه passed away in the same year in November. These majális were virtually the last set of formal majális that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه ever held. At this stage Hadhratjí's رحمة الله عليه health was also declining. Despite this, his voice was still very strong. Very few, if anybody, would have thought that this was the last Ramadhán that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه would be spending with us in this world.

Seeing that most Díní institutions close in Ramadhán, this is a month where many are free to come to Jalálábád and spend some time there. This is especially true of Díní students and 'ulemá. The majális in this month take on a special lustre and núrániyet, making these majális stand out even more compared to those conducte during other times of the year.

Hadhratjí's رحمة الله عليه majális were not absolutely formal. This is seen very clearly in these majális, where Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه tried to interact with the students and 'ulemá by asking them many rhetoric questions and getting them to respond to these questions. (In the translation, not all these questions have been recorded as such but have been converted to definite statements for ease of reading. Also, the response of those present has not been recorded as such, also for ease of reading.) Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه always tried to make his listeners think and ponder and not just get them to sit back and merely listen. In this way, the correct concern was created in the listeners.

One other point that needs to be emphasised, one that most readers will have already noted when reading the previous issues, is that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه made a special effort to teach basic principles and laws. He always emphasised the importance of knowing the basics. Then, using reason and logic, at which Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه excelled, one could then work out the

branches that arose from the basics. Just looking at the details and not understanding the basics would lead to many misconceptions and wrong a'mál. Alhamdulilláh, this teaching of his of getting to the basics when confronted by any issue, is seen in those 'ulemá who graduated from Jalálábád and also in those who had a close affiliation with Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه.

As usual, one's fervent du'á is that Alláh Ta'álá should grant us His special blessing by granting us the taufíq to imbibe the valuable lessons contained in these lessons and grant us all the taufíq to act according to these teachings.

Dr. I.M.

Postscript

Once again, jazákalláh to all those who assisted in the publication of these booklets, especially those who assisted in correcting the translations and assisted with the typesetting.

It is only correct to point out that we are all indebted to Brother Yusuf Bulbulia, who took special care to record the majális of Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه whenever he was in Jalálábád. These two appearing in this issue are only some of the majális that he had recorded. May Alláh Ta'álá grant him jazá-e-khair in both the worlds.

Seeing that no booklet of "For Friends" was published in 2008, I cannot promise that future publications will be forthcoming. Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to say jazákalláh to all those who made donations towards the printing, publication and posting of these booklets. Any donations received in future will not necessarily be used for future publications, as there is uncertainty in this matter.

Back copies of "For Friends" are still available. Cost of postage will be appreciated should requests be received for these.

THE FIRST MAJLIS IN THIS ISSUE

بِسْمِ اللَّـهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[This majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه *in Jalálábád on Tuesday, the 14th Shábán 1412, corresponding to the 8th February 1992.]*

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحْمَدَهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

[Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه *started off by saying:]*
I tend to cough quite severely at times...
[At that very moment Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه *was affected by a bout of somewhat prolonged coughing. Hadhratjí* رحمة الله عليه*., on recovering, went on to say:]*

Just see! It is not necessary to make such a statement – the evidence is in front of you. However, included in my disclosing it to you is the objective of requesting du'ás from you. In disclosing the taklíf caused by coughing I am disclosing my helplessness.

You will be making du'á? I am certain that you are making du'á and you continue to make du'á. However, there should be some quest (talab) from my side also. That is why I disclose my condition to you. Otherwise, there was no need to disclose it, as you sáhibán are already making du'á, out of muhabbat.

The need for a tálib to disclose his condition

In the same way, it is necessary for the tálib to disclose his condition to the sheikh. He should not sit back with this idea that the sheikh is aware of our complete state, that he has been aware and remains aware of our condition.

Firstly, this concept is incorrect. Besides Alláh Ta'álá nobody has knowledge of the unseen (ilme-ghaib) – not even the Nabí صلى الله عليه وسلم.

If, for argument's sake, the sheikh does come to know then, too, one should disclose one's condition to him. Also, if some activity of the tálib, the muríd, the friend, does come into the heart of the sheikh and he comes

to know of it, the sheikh will know it only superficially and not in detail. So, whether it manifests to him in a brief form or in a detailed form, when the person is a tálib of isláh, he should disclose his quest. To depend on the knowledge of the sheikh is a very grave and serious mistake.

The proof of this being a great error is absolutely clear. Just see: Alláh Ta'álá has the full and complete knowledge of each and every creation as a whole; more specifically take mankind, and especially Muslims – seeing that, alhamdulilláh, Muslims are being addressed at this moment. Does Alláh Ta'álá not know the condition of the temperament and the desires of every Muslim? Definitely, He knows! So, should one sit back with this thought: "Alláh Ta'álá knows everything, so what shall I say to Him and what should I place before Him? He already knows everything."?

So, has Alláh Ta'álá not ordered the Muslims, the believers, to place their requests in front of Him? Or, did He say: "It is not necessary for you to ask anything – I am aware of all your needs. I have fulfilled all your needs and I shall continue to do so. I am aware of the condition of your hearts."? Is this the case? This is not the case. However, what is the order given? "Ask of Me! Become beggars! Present your requests in Our court! Disclose your desires!" And, if you were not to do so, and you do not speak, Alláh Ta'álá is displeased at this. "Oho! You have become very independent! You have become very proud!"

Just see: Mu'min Záte-Bárí Ta'álá is desirous of the wishes of that creation, the mu'min human bondsman, that he should disclose his need.

Take the situation of a mu'min Muslim individual: the poor soul is such that that he has insufficient suitable clothes to wear and he has insufficient suitable food – in fact, he is starving. So, does Alláh Ta'álá not have knowledge of this? He definitely does have the knowledge! Therefore, if this mu'min thinks as follows: "Alláh Ta'álá knows about my indigent state and starvation. He knows about my clothes as well, what I am wearing. He will send to me. He will send me clothes and food as well." Well and good. Yet, what is the command? Ask! Disclose your needs!

Independence from the creation, not from the Creator

The command is to be independent from the creation that, in your heart,

there should be no dependence on the creation. However, for the mu'min's heart to be independent of Záte-Haqq...? This is forbidden! If it was not necessary to ask, then Huzúre-Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم, Sayyidul-Konayn, would not have asked!

Is my voice reaching you?

If it was not required to ask, then he would not have asked. Yet, he asked more from Alláh Ta'álá than we ask! Our asking is insignificant compared to the amount he asked. He even knew how much Alláh Ta'álá loved him and that Záte-Bárí Ta'álá had given him the title of "Habíb", the meaning of which is "Mahbúb" – one who is greatly loved. While Sayidiná Ibráhím عليه السلام was given the title of "Khalílulláh", which means "Muhib", the friend of Alláh Ta'álá, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was called "Habíb". It is also a known fact that the one who loves another will keep the loved one happy. Out of love, he will present gifts to him without the loved one having to ask. Yet, despite the fact that he was "Mahbúb", Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم kept on asking time and again, and asked for every type of thing, and would then add:

اَللّٰهُمَّ هٰذَا الدُّعَآءُ وَعَلَيْكَ الْاِجَابَةُ

O Alláh! This is my supplication and it is upon You to accept it.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is saying: "O Alláh! Whatever I am asking from You, is my asking. However, to grant these is Your task. All I am doing is asking from You. This is my duty." He is also saying: "To accept the supplication is Your task – according to expediency, according to suitability and in which there will be safety for me, accompanied by Your wisdom – according to these aspects, You will grant my supplication."

Qabúle-du'á has two meanings: The first meaning:

"To grant" – qabúl – has two meanings. The one meaning is: "To accept. That is, the request has been accepted." When the ruler of a state has also shown the words in which the request has to be made and has instructed: "Write down the request in these words", then one knows, beforehand, that the request will be accepted. So, when the request is put forward with the words that the ruler has shown and taught him, then it means

that the request has been accepted. So, Alláh Ta'álá has commanded us to say as follows:

رَّبِّ اغْفِرْ وَارْحَمْ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرّٰحِمِيْنَ ۝

My Lord! Forgive and have mercy, for You are the best of all who show mercy. (S.23.118.)

رَبَّنَا لَا تُؤَاخِذْنَآ إِنْ نَّسِيْنَآ أَوْ أَخْطَأْنَا ۚ

Our Lord! Do not take us to task if we forget or make mistakes. (S.2.286.)

رَبَّنَآ اٰتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَّفِي الْاٰ خِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَّقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ۝

Our Lord! Give unto us in the world what is good and in the hereafter what is good, and guard us from the punishment of the fire. (S.2.201.)

For ones' parents:

رَّبِّ ارْحَمْهُمَا كَمَا رَبَّيٰنِيْ صَغِيْرًا ؕ

My Lord! Have mercy on both of them as they cared for me when I was little. (S.17.24.).

One can see, as is shown to us at many different places, the words to be used in our requests. So, if the requests are made in those very words, will the requests not be granted? Definitely, they will be granted. The manifestation (zuhúr) of the du'á is a different issue.

However, beware! Should a mu'min ask for harám things? Should one ask for impermissible things? There is no question that this should be done. What should be done is to forward one's needs, those requirements which are in one's view. Similarly, there may be other needs which present from time to time. One may ask for these to be fulfilled. Then, these will be accepted.

Remember for always: The request has been accepted at that time when the request was presented. This is the first meaning of "qabúl".

The second meaning – when, where & how?

Now, when will the manifestation of the acceptance take place? How will it take place? Where will it manifest? Three words have been mentioned: (i) When, (ii) where and (iii) how will the acceptance manifest? In the answer is the concept of tafwídh, which is also referred to as anjám (result; consequence). And remember very well that tafwídh is the personal right (zátí haqq) of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá, whereas taslím is the right that Záte-Bárí Ta'álá has on the mu'min bondsman.

Tafwídh & taslím explained

Taslím is to accept the order of Alláh Ta'álá. The demand of ímán of the bandah is that he should accept; or should he not accept? Definitely, he should accept! By virtue of the ímán of the bandah, it is the personal right of Alláh Ta'álá on him to accept, to adopt taslím.

Tafwídh is to entrust. This is the personal right of Alláh Ta'álá Himself. It is fardh on the bandah.

Alláh Ta'álá states:

وَأُفَوِّضُ أَمْرِيٓ إِلَى اللّٰهِ ۚ

I entrust my affairs to Alláh. (S.40.44.)

At various places in the Qur'án Sharíf Alláh Ta'álá has mentioned the state of tafwídh of the Ambiyá.

So, tafwídh is to entrust the results and taslím is accept the manifestation of the results. Both of these are the personal rights of Alláh Ta'álá. In adopting tafwídh there is comfort and solace for the mu'min and also tranquillity (tusallí, taskín aur sukún).

Thus, du'á definitely gets accepted, but when, where and in which manner, we do not know. This is the meaning of tafwídh. This is the meaning of:

وَأُفَوِّضُ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّـهِ

I entrust my affairs to Alláh. (S.40.44.)

Three ways of manifestations of du'á

The du'á may be accepted and manifest in this world in the following two ways:

Firstly, the results are seen according to the item that had been asked for.

Secondly, it may not result in exactly the same way but it is substituted by something else in a different manner.

Thirdly, it may not manifest in the world at all, not at any time and not in any way, in which case, what will happen? "O mu'min, do you acknowledge the existence of this world and not the hereafter?" How will the mu'min respond? "Yes, I do acknowledge the existence of both." Why should he not acknowledge? Taubah, taubah! If he does not acknowledge, then he does not remain a mu'min. So, the result of the du'á will manifest in the hereafter.

Are you listening?

This answers the question: When? The result will manifest in the hereafter. How will it manifest? It will manifest in the manner that you will benefit – that is the manner in which it will manifest. But, definitely, it will manifest. The du'á has been accepted. The words with which it was ordered, in those words the request was put forward. Now, do not be in anticipation of the result, but adopt tafwídh. There is goodness in it.

The reason that the request was put forward was that of being in need. So, as one is in need in this world, so, in the 'Álame-ákhirat, one will be many, many, many, many times in greater need. Is that not so? In this world there is some sort of external assistance – somebody or other will come to one's assistance. For example: somebody will come forward and say: "May I press your legs?" And over there...? Who will come to press one's legs? So, compared to here, one will be in greater need over there.

Therefore, Alláh Ta'álá, through wisdom and expediency, has taken into consideration his bandah utmost benefit in that world, and has accumulated for him over there. The manifestation will be over there, in the following manner:

Alláh Ta'álá will grant him some elevated stages over there. The bandah mu'min will exclaim: "What is all this for? I never did any such deeds to deserve this!" Alláh Ta'álá will say: "You carried out an activity – did you not ask for that particular item?" The bandah mu'min will reply: "Yes, I did." "Did you receive it?" "No, I did not." Alláh Ta'álá will then say: "I have

accumulated it here for you!"

In today's terminology, one would call it "putting money in a bank". You know what a bank is, is that not so? Similarly, Alláh Ta'álá will let it accrue over there. One may call it also a "bank" in today's terminology. When money is placed in the bank, you get more than the amount you put in. Over here the question will arise whether that additional amount is halál or harám. However, over there one receives double, triple and quadruple. It is stated in the Qur'án Sharíf:

فَيُضٰعِفَهٗ لَهٗٓ أَضْعَافًا كَثِيْرَةً ؕ

So that He may multiply it many times (S. 2.245.)

Alláh Ta'álá will grant him double, triple, quadruple and so forth. What he will receive will be totally and completely pure. When the bandah mu'min witnesses what high stages he has attained by adopting tafwídh and taslím in the world at the time that he had asked and did not receive, then he will say: "It would have been better if You had not accepted any of my requests in the world from the aspect of manifestation so that I would have reaped everything here. That was marked for destruction (fání), whereas this here is everlasting."

The request had been accepted, but did not manifest in the world. So, what should one do in anticipation of its manifestation?

[The young students sitting in the majlis, to whom the above question was directed, gave a very feeble, indistinct response. Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه *teasingly addressed them.]*

What, did you not have breakfast this morning? This is the way I speak to the children. I do not speak scholarly or professorially to them, but more in a light-hearted manner. That is why I ask: "Perhaps you did not partake of breakfast and you are all sitting here hungry, is that why your voices are so feeble?"

So, what should one do with regard to the manifestation? Adopt tafwídh and taslím. Yes, indeed. The duty of the bandah from the aspect of consequences is to adopt tafwídh.

There is a Fársí couplet which says the following:

"We have handed over into Your custody all our wealth, whatever capital we own, whatever is ours, and also what we earn.

As for any increase or decrease, that calculation is up to You."

Is my voice reaching you?

Therefore, You have given the command to perform such and such 'ibádat. Some of the 'ibádat You have commanded in an unspecified form. Nothing was specified – the number of rakats is not specified and the time is not specified. Some 'ibádat You have commanded to be performed, both with the number of rakats specified and the time specified. Therefore, taslím, provided that there is no valid excuse.

And, what is the meaning of taslím? That one should do it if one wishes and not do it if one feels one does not want to? Of course not! Carry it out! Therefore, he carries it out immediately, even though the time was not specified and the amount was not specified. This bandah mu'min has muhabbat for that Záte-Mu'min. Will any mu'min refuse?

And Alláh Ta'álá has stated, with regard to 'ibádat, even though the time has not been specified, even though the amount has not been specified, this being left to the discretion of the mu'min bandah: "You consider your health, to maintain it is fardh. Also, look at your ease."

Sihhat (health) and sahúlat (ease/convenience)

"So, take into account your health and your convenience. See that, in contrast, there is no deterioration, no shortcomings, no harm and no damage, in any of your necessary affairs connected to you."

Is my voice reaching you?

Look at sahúlat. You have already seen that you have the health, and there are no straitened circumstances for you, and there is no obstruction in carrying out other necessary duties, and you have in your heart muhabbat for Alláh Ta'álá, and following the demand of that muhabbat, will this bandah carry out the 'ibádat or not? He will say: "Definitely, I shall carry it out!"

Fahím Sáhib is saying that definitely he will carry it out. This is a matter that requires fahm (deep understanding). Yes, Fahím Sáhib is saying – the demands of fahm, he is giving proof of fahm – that definitely he will carry

it out.

In actual fact, it is not necessary as far as Alláh Ta'álá is concerned, but the demand of his muhabbat is that he will definitely carry out that 'ibádat.

Have you understood the concept? This is the meaning of taslím. By saying: "Yes, yes," one does not attain taslím. However, demonstrate it by acting on the meaning of taslím. This is real taslím. Based on the demands of the mu'min's ímán this taslím is necessary and compulsory.

'Ibádát are of various types

Unspecified 'ibádát are of various types: One is bodily (jismání); one is monetary (málí); one is verbal (lisání); and one is in the mind/ heart (qalbí). For the latter three – málí, lisání and qalbí – there is no time that is specified and no time that it has to be discontinued.

However, when it comes to jismání 'ibádat, that is nafl namáz, there are restrictions, that one does not perform this at the time of the rising of the sun, at noon exactly and when the sun is setting. When it comes to monetary 'ibádat (which is for assisting the poor and providing them comfort), zikre-lisání and zikre-qalbí, there are no such restrictions. It is not said that at the time of sunrise one should not perform these, that at the time of noon one should not perform these and that at the time of sunset one should not perform these. Perform these generally. There is acceptance. Neither is time not specified, nor is there any relationship with quantity, nor is there any relationship with tahárat, that one should be with wudhú, nor is there any relationship with facing the direction of qiblah. Complete freedom has been given.

Perpetual zikr and nisbat

Yes, that is why Záte-Bárí Ta'álá has requested certain actions, from the aspect of 'ibádat, to be perpetual. The heart of the mu'min has become overjoyed at this! This is what his heart had desired! However, how to be able to do this? Permission was required. So, the decree came from over there, although it was not in the category of being wájib. From that side Alláh Ta'álá has muhabbat for the mu'min; from this side the mu'min has muhabbat for Alláh Ta'álá. One claps hands with both hands and not with

one hand. This is the meaning of nisbat-m'Alláh. Alláh Ta'álá has a bond with the 'abd and the 'abd has a bond with Alláh Ta'álá. This is the meaning of nisbat – the connection should be from both sides and not from only one side.

To continue: From the aspect of 'ibádat, some are specified, both as far as the time is concerned as well as the quantity, just like the fardh namáz: the time is also specified and the quantity is also specified. Fardh namáz is an 'ibádat to be performed for a short period only. Besides namáz, there are other acts of 'ibádat where neither the quantity is specified, nor is the time specified, nor is there the necessity for tahárat, nor is it necessary to face in the direction of qiblah. Otherwise, how would it be possible to be in 'ibádat all the time?

That is why there is a decree from Alláh Ta'álá, for the demand of muhabbat is zikr. Alláh Ta'álá states in the Qur'án Sharíf:

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلٰوةَ فَاذْكُرُوااللهَ قِيٰمًا وَّقُعُوْدًا وَّعَلٰى جُنُوْبِكُمْ ۚ

When you have performed your salát, remember Alláh standing, sitting and reclining. (S.4.103.)

This namáz that you have just performed was an 'ibádat for a short period only. So, do you now think that, having performed namáz, you are now freed from 'ibádat? Not at all! The zikr of Alláh Ta'álá should continue, whether standing or sitting or lying down. The words used for this are "yád" (whether verbally or without verbalising); "dhiyán"; "tasawwur"; "khiyál".

Reciting Durúd Sharíf

Some people say: "Recite Durúd Sharíf, but if you do not have wudhú, how can you recite Durúd Sharíf? You are reciting Durúd Sharíf without wudhú? Taubah, taubah, taubah!"

Just see how ignorant (jáhil) they are! Alláh Ta'álá is saying that zikr should be made all the time and the pre-condition of wudhú has not been stipulated. Yet, see what these persons are saying. They are portraying themselves as having a lot of 'ishq (love for Rasúlulláhصلى الله عليه وسلم). They are not only preventing themselves from reciting Durúd Sharíf but they

are preventing others as well.

May one not bring the wrods of the Qur'án Sharíf, which is the Kalám of Alláh Ta'álá, to one's lips without wudhú? Is it not permissible to recite the Qur'án Sharíf without wudhú? Of course, it is permissible. So, Kaláme-Iláhí one may recite without wudhú, but salát – meaning Durúd – on Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم is not permissible? Durúd Sharíf is also Kalám. Just see how they are deceiving others. And how they try to show that they have 'ishq and muhabbat! One may take the name of Alláh Ta'álá without wudhú but one may not recite Durúd Sharíf without wudhú? How can that be?

Another point: That which is fundamental – that on which is based everlasting salvation – the Kalimah Tayyibah, one may bring to one's lips without wudhú, and Durúd Sharíf one may not bring to one's lips without wudhú? What a great deception is this not! They are called great 'áshiqs! The bid'atís are called great 'áshiqs!

To continue: Alláh Ta'álá is saying:

فَاذْكُرُوااللهَ قِيٰمًا وَّقُعُوْدًا وَّعَلٰى جُنُوْبِكُمْ ۚ

Remember Alláh standing, sitting and reclining. (S.4.103.)

Keep on making the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá all the time – while standing, while sitting and while lying down. There is no restrictive condition of tahárat. The decree has been given, even though it is not in the category of being wájib. But, brother, how can a mu'min say such a thing? Even though it may not be in the category of wájib in that there will be reproof or punishment if one does not carry it out but, by the demand of being mu'min, by the demand of one's ímán, it will be wájib in practice.

Importance of Tahajjud

That is why the ahlulláh who are punctual with their Tahajjud namáz, consider it to be nafl but, in the performance of it, these ahlulláh perform it like a wájib act. Some fuqahá have said that Tahajjud is sunnate-mu'akkadah, but the majority has opined it to be nafl.

Is my voice reaching you?

Alláh Ta'álá has also addressed his Rasúl صلی الله علیه وسلم in his Kalám, in Surah Muzammil, to perform Tahajjud namáz. Yes, initially Tahajjud was

fardh. There must have been some special reason that it was fardh. It was Alláh Ta'álá's fadhl and His karam that the compulsion was abrogated but, nevertheless, its status, its position is such that it takes precedence over all other nawáfil. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is addressed in Surah Alam-Nashrah:

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانْصَبْ ۙ

So, when you have finished, still toil. (S.94.7.)

Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "When you have freed yourself from your duty – that is, from the aspect of your office of messengership, conveying to the creation the laws of Alláh Ta'álá, a duty which is carried out in the day and part of the beginning of nightfall, which is the last portion of the day as well – when you have freed yourself, what should you do? "Fansab". That is, toil in the latter part of the night in your own, personal 'ibádat."

Is my voice reaching you? Yes? Very good!

O you bondsmen! Shall I say it?

[This question was directed at those sitting in the majlis. There was a loud: "Yes!" in response.]

Therefore, from this it can be seen, according to the rules of logic – which you must have studied in the books of logic – when the Rasúl is given an order, it will apply equally to the deputy of the Rasúl as well – the ná'ibe-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم. Bear in mind that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was all the time in the yád of Alláh Ta'álá, in the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá, in the dhiyán, in the khiyál of Alláh Ta'álá, then too, as far as activity is concerned, he is being told: "When you have freed yourself from the effort of tablígh, then toil in your personal 'ibádat of Tahajjud."

Something incidental just comes to mind at this point: From this one can detect the error of the deviated groups who say: "The namáz you are performing is for show, whereas we are all the time in the remembrance and namáz of Alláh Ta'álá." This comment is just incidental.

To continue: What are the 'ulemá called? They are called the ná'ibe-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم. What can one say? When the 'álim stands up to deliver a lecture he extols heaps of virtues concerning the ná'ibe-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم. Yet,

what was the order given to Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم? Despite being occupied all the time with Alláh Ta'álá, he is being commanded to toil in the latter part of the night in the 'ibádat of Tahajjud. But, what is the ná'ibe-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم saying? Some say: "We are involved in the composition and writing of kitábs." Others say: "We are involved in teaching Dín." They maintain: "We are involved in Díní work all the time and working the whole day leaves us fatigued." So, the ná'ibe-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم has discarded Tahajjud. Yes, they will lecture abundantly on the virtues of 'ilm. Yes, there are great virtues in the 'ilm of the 'álim. However, there must be some status attached to the 'ilm from the aspect of practise and not merely on knowing them and paying lip service.

What is the quality of our namáz?

What shall I say? I feel ashamed to mention it. Never mind Tahajjud , let us take the five times daily fardh namáz: Can it be contrary to the noble station of a ná'ibe-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم to perform these regularly with proper wudhú, taking care to carry out the etiquettes and rules of wudhú correctly, to be meticulous about the takbíre-tahrímah, the takbíre-úlá?

Now, make an assessment, O you ná'ibe-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم! O you mudarrisín involved in teaching! O you writers! The preliminary part to what is wájib also becomes wájib. O talabá of the 'ilm of Dín! Have you performed your wudhú observing the correct etiquettes of wudhú, with silence that one should not talk about worldly matters while performing wudhú? Or have you discarded this rule?

When you proceeded to the masjid and entered it to perform your namáz, did you take care to observe the proper etiquettes? Or did you place your left foot into the masjid first, in a careless manner? Was your attitude: "What difference does it make whether one enters with the right foot or the left foot."? Even before this, when you were proceeding to the masjid, to the court of Báre-Iláhí, did you proceed conversing with one another? Or did you proceed with khushú' in your hearts, with awe in your hearts?

Let us scrutinise your gait, the way you walk: there is no khushú' in this as well, as evidenced by your walking. You are proceeding, but with utmost freedom, unrestricted. You are busy talking to your friends. There is not

the slightest awe or respect, no khauf, no diffidence in your temperament. You are unconcerned as to how you will have to stand when your pre-trial takes place, standing in namáz being just that. It must not be that the pre-trial will also be contrary to correct etiquette.

The reason for this being important is that khushú' is wájib for the namáz to be accepted, even though it may not be wájib for the due performance of the namáz. However, some jurists have said that khushú' is wájib even for the sihhat of namáz. O ná'ibe-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم! Tahajjud is still a distant matter. First see to your five-times namáz, perform them with the quality and hue they deserve, in their particular times that they have to be performed in, observing all the etiquettes, from the beginning, from takbíre-tahrímah, till the final salám.

Is my voice reaching you?

To continue: Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was instructed "fa'izá faraghta fansab". So, when you have freed yourself from teaching and writing, will "fa'izá faraghta fansab" not apply to you as well? O ná'ibe-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم, ponder! Make an appraisal! Probe within yourselves! More so seeing that you are tálibe-tazkíyah, tálibe-Sulúk, bá-mushtaq-sálik. Have you not taken a special stride in your expression of muhabbat? For, this is what we were discussing, that those who have ímán have a great passion and love for Alláh Ta'álá. For such there are no specifications, especially for those who have placed their feet on the path of Sulúk.

Sulúk is a very important part of Dín □ Hadíthe-Jibríl عليه السلام

Sulúk is a very important part of the Sharí'at. It is not outside of the Sharí'at. It is not excluded from the Sharí'at. It has a proved position. You must have read Hadíthe-Jibríl عليه السلام? I feel shy speaking in front of you – you are all scholars (ahle-'ilm). You must have studied in Mishkát Sharíf the Hadíthe-Jibríl عليه السلام, which I will now explain:

The honoured and illuminating majlis of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was in progress. The sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم were in attendance. Hadhrat-Jibríl عليه السلام appeared in the form of a human being. He then posed certain questions to Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. In logic and philosophy certain questions are posed to ascertain the haqíqat of issues.

The first question was: “What is ímán – Mal-ímán?” In other words, what is the haqíqat of ímán? The second question was: “What is Islám – Mal-Islám?” In other words, what is the haqíqat of Islám? Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم gave the haqíqat of both. Both times Hadhrat-Jibríl عليه السلام responded by saying: “Correct!” The sahábah رضى الله تعالى عنهم were amazed at this. The questioner was not only asking questions, but he was also affirming the correctness of the answers!

In these two questions and answers, beliefs were ratified by the question: “What is ímán?” and practise was ratified by the question: “What is Islám?”

The third question – What is ihsán?

Hadhrat-Jibríl عليه السلام then asked the third question: “What is ihsán – Mal-ihsán?” In other words, what is the haqíqat of ihsán?

So, what is this ihsán? This is Tasawwuf! This is Sulúk! Without ihsán, a person may have ímán, but it is dry and parched. One has Islám – in other words, a’mál – but Islám, without ihsán, is dry and parched. Ímán is also dry and Islám is also dry; ’aqá’id are also dry and a’mál are also dry.

When one understands what “Mal-Ihsán?” really is and one observes its rights, then there will be moisture in one’s ímán, there will be freshness and lushness in one’s a’mál.

If you are served dry rice, with not a trace of ghí, what will happen? You will say: “Oh yes, he did feed us, but the rice had to be fisted down the throat, it was so dry!” So, you desire some moisture, is that not so? Some people want abundant ghí. I do not know if it still happens nowadays but, previously, when people were invited to a wedding among the qassaí (butchers), then one person would stand with a jug of ghí and pour it into the food. The guests would cry out: “Pour more! Pour more! Pour more!” This desire for “lubrication” is according to each one’s temperament.

So, this ihsán is that wetness, that freshness and lushness. It is that basháshat (cheerfulness/ exuberance) of ímán and of Islám. When basháshat appears, then there is no reason for weakness to enter into one’s ímán and for laziness to creep into one’s a’mál. As the basháshat increases, so too will there be an increase in one’s ímán. There was ímán initially and this

then increased. This increase then becomes an objective to attain.

لِيَزْدَادُوْٓا إِيْمَانًا مَّعَ إِيْمَانِهِمْ ۗ

That they might add faith to their faith. (S.48.4.)

The danger of not having ihsán

The molvísáhibán ask: "What is this Sulúk? What is Tasawwuf?" One wonders whether they studied Mishkát Sharíf or not. If they have studied it, in what way did they study and which way were they taught? This is a very important part of Islám. Without it, a person may have ímán and Islám, but a danger exists. Without Sulúk, without Tasawwuf, a grave danger exists: one can never say when one stops performing namáz. One can never say when there will be a weakness coming into one's ímán. May Alláh Ta'álá protect and safeguard us!

Ponder over it.

Coming back to our theme:

فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلٰوةَ فَاذْكُرُوااللهَ قِيٰماً وَّقُعُوْدًا وَّعَلٰى جُنُوْبِكُمْ ۚ

When you have performed your salát, remember Alláh standing, sitting and reclining. (S.4.103.)

فَإِذَا فَرَغْتَ فَانْصَبْ ۙ

So, when you have finished, still toil. (S.94.7.)

These are addressed to Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم and also to the ná'ibe-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم. Subterfuges will not work here. When one has health and there is ease as well, and that there will be no hindrance to some necessary task, then does the demand of muhabbat say that one must not make Tahajjud? Or, does the demand of muhabbat say that we should execute the task on a continuous basis?

Qissah concerning Khwájah Báqíbilláh رحمة الله عليه

The qissah concerning Hadhrat Khwájah Báqíbilláh رحمة الله عليه the sheikh of Mujaddid Alfe-Thání رحمة الله عليه comes to mind. Hadhratwálá related this in his majlis. All of this is from there.

The barber came to Hadhrat Báqíbilláh رحمة الله عليه to trim his beard and his moustache. When the time came to trim the moustache, Hadhrat Báqíbilláh رحمة الله عليه was still busy with his zikr. His lips were moving as he made his zikr. The barber spoke in the simple Urdú spoken in Delhi. Mind you, the Urdú spoken in Lukhnow is very high and eloquent. He said: "Huzúr! Please, cut [i.e. stop] your zikr for a little while, otherwise I may just cut your lip!" This was the terminology the barber used.

Hadhrat Ashraf Alí Thánwí رحمة الله عليه related this incident to us. O you sálikín! You have set your feet on the path to develop a special relationship with Alláh Ta'álá. You heard what the barber said? To repeat: He said: "Huzúr! Please, cut your zikr for a little while, otherwise I may just cut your lip!" Hadhrat Báqíbilláh رحمة الله عليه responded to this by saying: "For my lip to be cut is acceptable. To cut my zikr is not!"

Do you see? This is the effect of Sulúk! A question: Is it forbidden in the Sharí'at to stop making zikr?

So, ponder over it, O ná'ibe-Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم, especially the sálikín. This is Sulúk. Nowadays: "Sulúk" exists only in name. Alas! The term "Sulúk" rests merely on the recitation of wazífas.

The subject matter of Sulúk is akhláq – the elimination of the mean and blameworthy characteristics (izálah akhláqe-razílah zamímah) is the subject matter of Sulúk. Some refer to the process as "change" (imálah). I prefer the term "izálah" (elimination) instead of "imálah" (change) because of the following reason: If stinginess and jealousy, two of the blameworthy qualities, do not show in one's actions, then they have been eliminated. Therefore, I use the term "izálah", but the actual term is "imálah".

To continue: If Hadhrat Báqíbilláh رحمة الله عليه had to stop his zikr, would there have been any punishment for him? Would there have been any reprimand? Of course not. However, there inside him was something that kept him from stopping his zikr. And that was the following:

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِّلّٰهِ ۭ

Those who believe are passionate in their love for Alláh. (S.2.165.)

This appears to be a declarative statement (akhbár), but actually, in its

meaning it is a command of Alláh Ta'álá (inshá). Thus, the meaning of this report would be that there should a great passionate love for Alláh Ta'álá. The demand of this passionate love should be to remember the loved One and not to forget Him.

Some couplets of Sarmad رحمة الله عليه

Sarmad رحمة الله عليه has written some Fársí couplets. His mazár is situated at the eastern door of the Jáme' Masjid in Delhi. He reprimands himself:

O Sarmad, stop your lamenting and complaining.
What squabbles have you fallen into?
Stop your lamenting and complaining.
Do one task out of two tasks.
What is this task?
Either entrust your life to Him for His pleasure,
Or turn your gaze away from your real Friend!

He is saying:

Look! That Being for whom you have muhabbat, entrust your life to Him for His pleasure. If you are unable to do this, then how can you turn to both directions? How can you commit this act of shierk? At times you turn to the creation to seek the pleasure of the creation, and at times you turn to the Creator to seek the pleasure of the Creator. How can you turn to both directions? If you are undecided, then turn your gaze away from your real Friend. End of the issue! How can you be two-faced? What suits your temperament you do and what does not suit you, you do not do?

Acting on rukhsat (latitude) is also 'ibádat

If it is said: "How can we be in the remembrance of Alláh Ta'álá all the time? We also have to attend to our personal needs." The answer is: Depending on the situation and circumstances, Alláh Ta'álá Himself has granted permission. Depending on the circumstances, Alláh Ta'álá Himself has granted rukhsat. Granting of these latitudes is in itself a ne'mat. To utilise the latitude on the said occasion is also 'ibádat.

O you students! Is my voice reaching you?

For example: There is latitude at the time of illness. At that time, in whatever manner one can perform 'ibádat, will be to the pleasure of the

Friend. There is, thus, no need to think. Take namáz: Qiyám is wájib in namáz. If one is unable to stand due to illness, standing is also pardoned. If one is unable even to sit, then lie down and perform your namáz using movements of the head to indicate rukú' and sajdah.

Some latitudes are in the category of being wájib – one has to compulsorily observe the rukhsat. For example: If one has become a musáfir in shar'í terms, one has to perform two rakats of fardh instead of four. If you perform four rakats then you have sinned.

In this manner, whatever amount that has been specified as being wájib, to exceed this would be ná-já'iz. So, why let your gaze dwell on whether there is little or a lot in matters where the amount specified is in the category of wájib? For example: It is the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá that He has specified two rakats of sunnat and two rakats of fardh for Fajr. If one were to say: "I slept well the whole night. I woke up feeling very much at ease and serene. Today I shall perform four rakats of fardh." This is harám! There has been an alteration in the laws. This performing of only two rakats is not such a latitude that it can be changed.

So, Alláh Ta'álá has showered His fadhl and karam on His bondsmen by taking in account the conditions of the bondsmen. On such occasions there is no need to stop and think.

Namáz may be m'áf but not zikr

O 'áshiqe-Rasúl صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم! O lovers of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá! Take into consideration your health and your ease, that there is no harm to you. Also, look at your necessary duties, that they are not neglected. Although the requisition by Alláh Ta'álá may not be at the level of wájib, but the demands of "ashhaddate-muhabbat" is that, in practice, consider it to be wájib. The zikr of Alláh Ta'álá should be made continuously, while standing, while sitting and while lying down. And the meaning of zikr is yád bi-harkate-lisán or bi-qiráre-qalb (remembrance by the movement of the tongue or by affirmation in the heart).

That is why, dear children, even on the battlefield of jihad, namáz may be pardoned at its time – as it did happen during the Battle of the Trench – but zikr is not pardoned. Even on the battlefield of jihád zikr is not

pardoned.

The question arises: Why is zikr not m'áf in this situation? The answer is as follows: If the yád of Alláh Ta'álá does not remain in the heart, if the dhiyán of Alláh Ta'álá does not remain in the heart, if the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá does not remain in the heart then, when waging jihád, one will act on the natural passions within oneself and deal with the enemy in whatever way it suits one when confronting him.

Is my voice reaching you? Ay-yuhat-tulláb! O you students! Whatever actions that are carried out, based on natural passions but are contrary to the Sharí'at, can they be said to be 'ibádat or non-'ibádat? Obviously, the actions will be non-'ibádat. Now, why did this non-'ibádat occur? The reason is that zikr was not in the heart. The yád of Alláh Ta'álá was not in the heart. The reason is that the haqíqat of zikr is:

كُلُّ مُطِيْعٍ لِلّٰهِ فَهُوَذَاكِرٌ

Every obedient [bondsman] of Alláh Ta'álá in activity is a zákir.

Do you see the effect of yád? Do you see the status of zikr? Namáz may be pardoned, as explained above but, even at that level, zikr cannot be pardoned.

The reality of dunyá is to be in ghaflat

That is why it is said that dunyá is not the name of being a millionaire or billionaire but the paraphrased Fársí couplets explain it as follows:

Somebody asked:

"What is dunyá?"

The answer given was:

"O yár, this is no very subtle issue. It is no ponderous matter."

"Oh! We thought it was a very grave issue."

"No, no! It is only this that there should be no negligence (ghaflat) in the heart of the yád of Alláh Ta'álá, irrespective of whether a heap of silver is placed in front of you, irrespective of whether a heap of gold is placed in front of you, irrespective of whether a heap of valuable jewels is placed in front of you, irrespective of whether you become the king over the whole

world!"

Do you understand? Have you seen the high status of zikr, O you sálikín, O you tálibáne-tazkíyah?

Each has its rank and status. One is that of the villager; one is that of the city dweller; one is that of the poor person; one is that of the rich person; one is that of the nawáb; one is that of a minister; one is that of the president; and one is that of the king. Kingship has terminated in this era. Sultanate has also ceased, though there may still be remnants somewhere or other, but they also have become playthings in the hands of others. So, nowadays we are left with prime ministers and presidents. In any case, the highest status, from the worldly aspect, is that of a king. There is no higher status.

So, even though a person may become the king of the whole world, but there is no ghaflat of Alláh Ta'álá in his heart, outwardly he may be a king but he is a faqír. Now, do you understand the haqíqat of dunyá? Alláh Ta'álá is not forbidding anybody from being a millionaire or billionaire. A person may not be rich – he may be the poorest of the poor – however there is ghaflat in his heart, then that kingship of the world is better than this poverty. To repeat: that kingship of the whole world without a trace of ghaflat, is better than this poverty where there is ghaflat in his heart.

Who is preventing you from pursuing agriculture? Who is stopping you from trade and commerce? Who is stopping you from seeking employment? Who is preventing you from attaining skills, artisanship and industries? However, yes, it should be subservient to the Sharí'at.

On the other hand is that 'álimsáhib who is involved in teaching, but his heart is devoid of yád and he is in ghaflat... Well, what can one say? May as well carry on teaching.

The four bequests of Hadhrat Khwájah Bakhtiyár Kákí رحمة الله عليه

An incident mentioned by Hadhratwálá comes to mind.

Hadhrat Khwájah Qutbuddín Bakhtiyár Kákí رحمة الله عليه who was the khalífah of Hadhrat Khwájah Mu'ínuddín Chistí رحمة الله عليه had just passed away. He had made a bequest that his Janázah namáz should be performed by that person who had the following qualifications:

•"My Janázah namáz should be read by that person who was has been with wudhú all the time.

•"My Janázah namáz should be read by that person who has never missed the takbíre-tahrímah.

•"My Janázah namáz should be read by that person who has never missed the sunnat namáz that is read before the Asr namáz.

•"My Janázah namáz should be read by that person who has never involved himself in nazare-bid." (That is, he has never cast lustful glances at ghair-mahrams.)

After having made these four bequests, he passed away. Having made the mayyat ready, it was now time for the Janázah namáz. The trustee, to whom the bequests were made, came forward and announced the bequests made by Hadhrat Khwájah Qutbuddín Bakhtiyár Kákí رحمة الله عليه. Nobody stepped forward, even though his khulafá' were present. It is a different matter that the status of the khulafá' may be higher but it could be possible that, before become khulafá', these qualities were not in them.

The announcement was made three times in a loud voice. It was the era of Sultan Shamshuddín Altamash رحمة الله عليه. To everybody's surprise, he himself, the king, stepped forward. He said: "Alhamdulilláh, shukran-lilláh! I am such a person. I am stating this purely because we have been told to express our gratitude for our blessings – 'wa ammá bi-ne'mati fa-haddith.'"

Who was this – a poor person or a king? He was a king! Imagine the good character a king must have. Also, he had these four qualities, that he was with wudhú all the time, that he had never missed making namáz with takbíre-tahrímah, that he had never missed performing the four rakats sunnats before the Asr namáz and he had not been guilty of nazare-bid. This is even more remarkable taking into account that there must have been laundís in the palace and he had to carry out all the duties of a sultan. Despite being a king, he was a faqír.

Ponder over it.

What do we see over her? Despite being a faqír, takabbur has not been eliminated. Whereas, over there, despite being a king, he had an extreme sense of awe and humility. He did not gaze with contempt at anybody and he did look at himself as being high and mighty.

Ponder over it, O you sálikín, O you honourable ’ulemá and mudarrisín. By the teaching of virtues, have you come to understand the question and answer? What is dunyá? It is to be negligent (gháfil) of Alláh Ta’álá.

So, when there is a general requisition that whichever mu’min who claims to have ímán, the demand of this claim is: “ashaddu-hubbu-lillláh,” that he has a great passionate love for Alláh Ta’álá. The demand of this passionate love for Alláh Ta’álá is that the mu’min should be in His yád all the time and not to be in ghaflat. You now know the crux of life that it is the yád of Alláh Ta’álá.

The role of the Qur’án Sharíf for the ’áshiq

There is another Fársí couplet which explains this very nicely:

The questioner asked:

“O, one who understands the Kaláme-Haqq, just explain what is the Qur’án?”

This person replied:

“Arè yár! My dear friend! Don’t you know the answer that you are asking me?”

Alláh Ta’álá, the Knower of the unseen, knows that His mu’min bondsman who has brought ímán on Him will have muhabbat for Him. And the demands of this muhabbat are that he will have the desire to speak to Him also and see Him also.

Is that not so? Think! Contemplate! Ponder! All this is present in the Qur’án Sharíf. This is a teaching lesson taking place.

To continue with the reply given:

“Arè, is this a question to ask that you are asking me? Very well, listen! It is for the mu’min to be able to see the Face of the Rabb of mankind.”

The mu’min has a great, passionate love for Záte-Bárí Ta’álá. Where there is a great, passionate love – which is referred to as ’ishq in our terminology – the demand of this love is to see the One who is loved. Is that not so? Also, there is a desire to speak to the One he loves. Is that not so? The connection that exists between Záte-Bárí Ta’álá and this mu’min bandah, and the connection that this mu’min bandah has with Záte-Bárí Ta’álá, is to be able to see one another. However, how can the mu’min bandah see Záte-Bárí Ta’álá in this world with these eyes? Even Hadhrat Músá عليه السلام who spoke to Alláh Ta’álá was told that he could never see Alláh Ta’álá in

this world.

Besides wanting to see Záte-Bárí Ta'álá, there is a desire to speak with the loved One. This is also not possible in this world for this mu'min bandah. That is why Záte-Bárí Ta'álá has revealed His Kalám as a substitute for speaking directly to Him. By reciting His Kalám, one is conversing with Him. This Kalám is the secret communication with Him. By reciting the Kalám, one is speaking with Him and one is seeing Him as well. There is mutual visualisation as well as mutual conversation. Therefore, Alláh Ta'álá has kept His dídár and His speaking in this Kalám, the Qur'án Sharíf. Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "If you want to see Me, look at this Kalám; if you want to speak to Me, recite this Kalám."

We were saying – our theme has been – that the demand of ashhaddate-muhabbat of the mu'min is to be in the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá all the time. The time is not specified, tahárat is not specified, facing the qiblah is not specified and the etiquettes to be observed in a majlis are not specified. So, whenever you wish, in whichever manner you wish, as much as you wish, converse with Him. Provided that there is no harm to your health and there is ease.

Summary of the majlis

Let me explain it in another way: It is an open fact that one has two hands; one has two feet; and so forth. Most of our body parts are in pairs. However, one has only one tongue and only one heart. And Alláh Ta'álá is, how many? Only One! Alláh Ta'álá is trying to convey a message to us: "I am One; you have one tongue; so that one tongue is for My zikr. Again, I am One. You have one heart and that one heart is for My yád." Thus, the tongue and the heart have now become the special preserves for Záte-Bárí Ta'álá. Therefore, the tongue should not be free of the zikr, and the heart should not be empty of the dhiyán of that One.

According to the philosophers, it is not possible for there to be "emptiness". Any container always contains something, even if it only air. Therefore, it is not possible that the tongue of a mu'min can be empty of zikr and the heart can be empty of dhiyán.

That is why Alláh Ta'álá, through the tongue of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم

has stated:

مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْاٰخِرِ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْرًا اَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ

That person who has brought ímán on Alláh and the day of Qiyámat

What are its demands?

When he speaks, he should utter goodness.

And this will become ’ibádat.

Otherwise he should remain silent.

Thus, to speak is also ’ibádat and to remain silent is also ’ibádat. The reason is that, when he speaks, he does so subservient to the command. When he remains silent, he does so subservient to the command. It is subservient to the command that he has tranquillity in his heart and tranquillity of the tongue. Do you see what ’ibádat is? Silence is also ’ibádat and speech is also ’ibádat.

We do have permission to speak. When we speak, it should be goodness. The heart has permission to be in motion – that is, we have permission to ruminate and ponder – but it should be with His dhiyán. If the tongue moves it should be with His Kalám and His name; and if the heart moves it should be with His dhiyán.

This is the demand of:

وَالَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْآ أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلّٰهِ ؕ

Those who believe are passionate in their love for Alláh. (S.2.165.)

Du’á

May Alláh Ta’álá, out of His grace and bounty, grant us the taufíq to practise accordingly.

وَاٰخِرُدَعْوَانَااَنِ الْحَمْدُلِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

Khudá hafiz.

[P.S. Kindly note that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه had mentioned on several occasions that zikre-lisání is not permitted when answering the call of nature, when naked and when having marital relations.]

THE SECOND MAJLIS IN THIS ISSUE

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه in Jalálábád on Tuesday, the 4th Ramadhán 1412, corresponding to the 10th March 1992.]

[Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه was coughing just prior to starting the majlis. Coughing occurred at intervals during the talk.]

One's health suddenly changes. Fifteen to twenty minutes prior to this, I was well and I was busy doing my work. Then I had the urge to urinate and I went to relieve myself. When I came back, I suddenly felt very weak. This happens at times. As it is, I am weak already, and the weakness then increases. Then my breathing becomes difficult. I am stating this merely for your information. I am also mentioning this so that you will make more du'á. That is, I am requesting your du'ás. Otherwise, time is very precious.

That item on which Alláh Ta'álá has taken a qasm, that item will be of great value, it is to be highly valued and it is to be quested, each at its level.

Nafse-ammárah, nafse-lowwámah & nafse-mutma'innah

Alláh Ta'álá has not taken a qasm on nafse-ammárah, has he? However, He has taken qasm on nafse-lowwámah :

وَلَآ أُقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ ۞

Nay, I swear by the reproaching soul. (S.75.2.)

Therefore, nafse-lowwámah is also something to be valued very highly. Alláh Ta'álá becomes very happy from the aspect that it indicates progress. Further on is the nafse-mutma'innah – the nafs which has tranquillity, life filled with tranquillity.

Nafse-lowwámah will be called such when, having made some mistake, having committed some indiscretion, this bandah feels ashamed and he reproaches and censures himself; his temperament feels shy to communicate with Haqq Ta'álá; he has a sense of shame; he is contrite. Then Alláh Ta'álá feels extremely happy, especially seeing that this bandah has not seen Alláh Ta'álá.

Has anybody seen Alláh Ta'álá with his eyes in this world? Hadhrat Músá عليه السلام had even made the request to allow him to see Him. Alláh Ta'álá replied that he could not see Him.

To continue: Alláh Ta'álá becomes extremely happy. Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "Without seeing Me this is how he believes in Me, as it should be when one has brought ímán. Just see how an amazing bandah is this! He has not even seen Me yet he considers Me to be omniscient and omnipotent, and he is turning to Me without having seen Me! What an excellent bandah is he not! He is giving evidence of possessing an upright intelligence and a temperament that is right-minded. The manner in which he is reproaching himself and censuring himself, the manner in which he is shamefacedly making taubah, as if he is seeing Me, and telling himself: 'Alláh Ta'álá has seen this action of mine.'"

So, such verifications, such effects, such signs, such tokens have brought about a conviction in his heart that, without seeing, he has accepted that he has seen. Just as somebody would feel ashamed of saying something vulgar if he is being watched, is that not so?

So, over here, without seeing, his conviction is greater than if he had seen. Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "He has seen My manifestations, My tokens and My signs, My proofs and My substantiations that are present in this universe on a divine basis (takwíní) and his upright intelligence, with a temperament that is right-minded, have believed Me to be omnipresent

and omniscient as if he has actually seen Me. That is how ashamed he feels. He is turning towards Me with repentance. He is penitent. He is returning to Me."

Alláh Ta'álá is very happy with him. Alláh Ta'álá is extremely happy with him.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had also said that those who make istighfár – those who repent – will be in his company. The du'á appears in the Hadíth Sharíf that, just as the muqarrabín – those who are close – will be in his company, those who make istighfár will also be in his company.

Alláh Ta'álá has also stated in a Hadíth Sharíf (Hadíthe-Qudsí) in direct reference to such sinners: "O you believers! Who is there amongst you who are not sinners? And the best of sinners are those who make taubah."

Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "Oh, so you consider yourself to be without sin? Do you think you can perform 'ibádat in accordance with My status and majesty? Do you think that you are able to save yourself from sins from the aspect of My status and majesty? If you are unable to then why is there this 'ujub? Why is there this takabbur? I see: by making 'ibádat continuously, you consider that it is your own personal perfection! That is why you are now conceited!"

Is my voice reaching you?

"Is that it that you do not think that it can be snatched away? In the excellence that you have, in the meritorious deeds you perform and in saving yourself from evil, you consider these to be your personal achievements? 'Ujub has entered into you. You do not feel that they may be snatched from you? And if there is the danger of these being snatched from you, how can takabbur develop within you?"

The difference between 'ujub (conceit) and takabbur (arrogance)

'Ujub is that aspect that the gaze is on oneself. "The abstention from sins and the performance of 'ibádat comes from my personal effort, that it is my personal quality." This is when 'ujub enters. The person is infatuated with himself. His gaze is focused on himself.

This illness progresses further. Your gaze falls on that poor soul who is involved in sins, who is involved in disobedience. You look at him with

contempt. Oho! Takabbur has also now entered.

Do you now understand the difference between ’ujub and takabbur?

“Kullukum-khattá’ún” Each one of you is a sinner. Why are you not reproaching yourself? You are not bringing yourself to repent? Are you refraining from making taubah? Why are you refraining? The reason is that you do not consider yourself as one who has sinned, one to be sinning. You have this thought: “I have never committed sins. I am not one to commit sins.” Alláh Ta’álá is displeased to an extremely high degree with such a sinner.

The state of true taubah

That bandah who does not attribute goodness to himself and he does not look disdainfully at others; he is engulfed in inebriating perspiration in utter contrition, and reproaches himself continuously, asking him himself: “How could I have such thoughts?” he is said to be making true taubah.

Haqq Ta’álá says: “Kullukum khattá’ún”: Everyone from amongst you is a sinner and has sinned. This is something one should keep in the forefront. Yes, when the bandah keeps this in front of his vision and he reproaches himself, he censures himself; he becomes ashamed; he becomes remorseful; he is engulfed in a heavy sweat; then he is said to be making real taubah. Without remorse, taubah is not taubah.

What is your position now? Just now, now you were from the ashrár (wicked), from the khattá’ún (sinners); now, even now, you have become one of the akhyár (the virtuous; the saintly)!

What do you understand by this? Let me repeat: Just now, now you were from the miscreants, from the ashrár, filled with conceit and arrogance, and when out of remorse you were engulfed in a heavy sweat– what is called true remorse and taubah – then you became one of the akhyár. All of you. “Kullukum” is plural.

Do you understand the point?

Just see! Look at the karam of Alláh Ta’álá! Just now you were sharír (wicked), and now you have become khair (good)! Just now you were from the ashrár (most wicked), now you have become one of the akhyár (most virous)! Just now you were from the ashrár, now you have become one of

the abrár (saintly)!

إِنَّ الْأَبْرَارَ لَفِيْ نَعِيْمٍ ۙ

The righteous truly will be in delight. (S.82.13.)

Just now you were from those deserving of qehr (wrath) and now you are from those deserving mehr (dowry)! Take note of the words being used.

To continue: We have come to know that taubah is a very precious quality in the eyes of Alláh Ta'álá. Repentance and remorse are very precious qualities because you are reproaching yourself. You are now at the level of nafse-lowwámah. And Alláh Ta'álá has taken qasm on nafse-lowwámah. And that which Alláh Ta'álá has taken qasm on is something to be valued. And whatever is of value is something worthy of talab – worthy of quest; to search for and to obtain. It follows that taubah is worthy of talab in the eyes of Alláh Ta'álá, and it is to be valued. That is why qasm has been taken on nafse-lowwámah. Therefore, the nafse-lowwámah of the mu'min is to be valued.

Is there such a mu'min who, within himself, sooner or later, does not feel remorseful at having sinned openly, leaving aside the sins committed secretly?

Thus, if a sinner, having committed sin upon sin, appears in front of a pious person, how do you know that he has not made taubah? One should think well of others – have husne-zin – and one should say to oneself that he has repented and, if so, he is of the abrár. This may not be within your knowledge but, in principle, this should be within the scope of your knowledge.

Therefore, you should not gaze with contempt at any mu'min sinner. When you are not supposed to look contemptuously at such a mu'min then for you to consider yourself to be better than him and for you to look at him with contempt, you have descended to the group of ashrár, whereas he is among the abrár! Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "Outwardly, he appears to be among the ashrár in your eyes, but he is among the abrár in My eyes. And you may appear to be among the abrár in your own eyes but, O abrár, you are among the ashrár in My eyes!"

What do you understand? May Alláh Ta'álá make it that understanding comes to our minds. These are aspects and hues. Have you understood the points made?

كُلُّكُمْ خَطَّاءٌ وَخَيْرُ الْخَطَّائِيْنَ التَّوَّابُوْنَ

All of you are sinners; and the best of sinners are those who make taubah.

Shaitán's tricks and how to combat him

After making taubah – having become repentant – and having taken a vow within himself not to sin in the future, Shaitán comes and tries to influence him: "Why are you taking an oath? Wait awhile and then see. Wait till tomorrow and then see if your vow remains intact or not." Shaitán has come and he is firm in his argument. The mu'min is firm on his resolution and the mu'min should overcome the evil one.

If such a thought from Shaitán enters the mind that he is trying to prevent the mu'min from making taubah, and he is placing such waswasah into his mind, he should then address Shaitán fearlessly and boldly and say: "Fine! When the time comes, I'll see. At this moment it is my vow to abstain from sin in the future. Should I break my vow, I'll cross that bridge at that time. However, at this moment in time, my vow is firm! Were I to act contrary to my vow we'll see to it at that time. What will there to be seen? The following: You, O Shaitán, also committed a crime but you were not remorseful. You have seen me that I have committed sins. I admit to it. However, you have seen that I do become remorseful. I also feel ashamed. I also reproach and censure myself. So, – Alláh forbid! – should I fall into sin again in future, my nature is such that I will feel remorseful again and I shall make taubah again."

However, merely to make istighfár with the tongue is not sufficient. Until you do not feel remorse within yourself, until you do not reproach yourself, just to say: "Astaghfirulláh, astaghfirulláh, astaghfirulláh," is not enough. On the other hand, even if you do not verbally say "Astaghfirulláh," but you have in your heart all the features of istighfár – if remorse and being ashamed are present – then istighfár has been made. This is the haqíqat of the life of a mu'min.

One should have knowledge of the haqá'iq and ma'árif – the deeper realities and cognisances. Then you will become of the ahle-haqq and the ahle-ma'rifat. It is very necessary to have knowledge of the haqá'iq and ma'árif. Then you will be said to be of the ahle-haqá'iq and the ahle-ma'árif.

Making qadr and having talab and the ákhirat

To continue: There is great value attached to time. Therefore, it is worthy of questing (talab). One can say that when an item is valued, made qadr of, is it sought after. If something is not valued at all, will anybody seek it? Just take the worldly people: Do they not value wealth? Definitely, they do. Therefore, the degree to which they attach value to wealth, to that degree will they seek it. Is that not so? The sequence is as follows: First, one attaches a value to it and then one will seek it.

In the same manner, the concept of ákhirat that is in one's mind will be valued as such. To that degree will there be a quest for it. What is of worth, that is worthy of been sought for. Therefore, if the ákhirat is valued, then it will be sought for accordingly. Thus, when it is worthy of being sought, then the intermediary means, the resources, the wájibát and the pre-conditions pertaining to the ákhirat, will all be valued in one's heart.

Therefore, the tálib will meticulously search for all the pre-conditions, the means, the resources – each and every single one – for he has now developed the talab. That is why he is not prepared to leave out even the very minute aspects, even though their size is that of an atom:

فَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ خَيْرًا يَّرَهٗ ۫

And whoever does an atom's weight of good will see it. (S.99.7.)

Even though the means are the equivalent of the size of an atom, the smallest of the small, he will not let it pass because it is goodness and it will be khair in the ákhirat. He is not prepared to discard that khair. He is not willing to leave off that khair unless there are some forced circumstances, some constraints present. Then it would be an exception. Otherwise, on his own volition he has no wish to discard it. Thus, even though the khair is at the level of an atom it also has value in it.

Do you understand the points made?

When the khair at the level of an atom is valued, the khair that is at an intermediate level and the khair that is at the higher level – the question of discarding these does not arise at all!

So, such a mu'min, who has a sense of values, a tálib of value, will he ever discard namáz, that namáz which is fardh and that namáz which is wájib? Never mind leaving these, he will not even leave those namáz which fall in the category of mandúp (encouraged) and mustahab, which are referred to as nafl.

Yes, should he be helpless, should there be some forced circumstances then, very well, he is helpless and constrained. However, of his own will, he will not discard these in the situations where he is neither so physically weak, nor so ill, nor is there difficulty in his journey.

Do you understand?

Latitude (rukhsat) and loftiness ('azímat)

In a particular situation Záte-Bárí Ta'álá may have given latitude (rukhsat) but he will act at the higher level ('azímat). What do you understand? To explain: When on a journey, the rukhsat given allows one not to perform the namáz that is sunnate-mu'aqqidah. However, this tálib looks at the ease and, seeing that there are no difficulties, he feels absolutely dismayed at not performing it.

Do you understand?

Yes, if some constraints, some forced circumstances present themselves, then he will take benefit from the ne'mat of Alláh Ta'álá's rukhsat. He will make shukr. His muhabbat for Alláh Ta'álá will increase. He will say: "Wáh, Alláh Ta'álá! Wáh! This is Your bounty! The life that I have is from You. If some difficult conditions were to be encountered, what would it matter? However, O Alláh! The love that You have for my life..."

Shall I tell you? Yes? Well, then I will: "O Alláh! The love that You have for my life is greater than the love that I have for my own life! O Karím! O Jawád! O Ghaffár! You have greater love for my life than I have. What latitude have You not given! You have decreed: 'If you are ill and weak, do not stand and perform your namáz – it should not happen that you

suddenly feel dizzy and fall. Therefore, sit or lie down and read. Besides the fardh and wájib, you have been given rukhsat not to perform the other namáz. '" You may feel that there is ease. However, you are on a journey and you do not know whether the ease will remain or not, whether it will continue or not.

The muhabbat for Alláh Ta'álá continuous to increase in the heart of the mu'min when he sees these blessings. This is the demand of the aqale-mustaqím, fehme-salím and a temperament that is salimah – a mind that is level-headed, an understanding that has depth and a temperament that is accommodating.

Has Alláh Ta'álá not shown Himself to be muhsin (a benefactor)? Has He not shown Himself to be mun'im (One who grants favours)? Should the muhabbat for such a muhsin and mun'im increase or decrease?

Therefore, the question to ask is, keeping these blessings in view, why is the muhabbat that the mu'min should have for Haqq Ta'álá not increasing? Why has ashhaddate-muhabbat not entered? Why is ashhaddate-muhabbat still not entering?

And, what are the demands of ashhaddate-muhabbat? Answer: The mu'min looks at hints. He looks at intimations. He assesses the emotional make-up (mizáj). He then brings into practice according to the guidelines obtained from these. That being the case, how can he discard nafl? Performing nafl would be the effect of an increase in muhabbat, and his a'máls give evidence of this.

Why is the ákhirat worthy of being valued?

So, the ákhirat is worthy of being valued in the heart of the mu'min. Why is it worthy of being valued? The reasons are that the ákhirat is lasting and it has only khair in it. Its duration is for eternity. Life in it is immortal. There is nothing but goodness in it. So, in the heart of the mu'min, why should the ákhirat not be valued in comparison to this world?

When one is confronted by two opposing issues, it is necessary to search for the issue that takes priority, to see which of the two has to be given prominence. When a new situation presents, when two alternatives present, which of the two should be given precedence? Look carefully to see which

of the two is worthy of giving pre-eminence. Of the two, one is temporary and perishable (fání), whereas the other is everlasting and non-perishable (báqí bi-khulúd).

The one that is fání is not free of evils, whereas the one that is báqí has no trace of any evil. Therefore, the latter will be given pre-eminence because it has permanence and only goodness in it, and not the former which is opposing it and which is fání, such a fání which is not free of evils.

So, is this world, this dunyá, worthy of giving pre-eminence or is the hereafter worthy of giving pre-eminence? It will be the hereafter. So, when the hereafter is worthy of pre-eminence and this dunyá is not to be given pre-eminence, which tasks should be one's objectives in attaining success? Should one's success not be in following the methodology for the ákhirat, in utilising the means for the ákhirat and adopting the compulsory methods for the ákhirat? Or in discarding these?

In the formula for success initially there is fatigue

When, in your minds the ákhirat has become pre-eminent, nurture it. When the ákhirat has attained a high value and has become worthy of being sought after, then Alláh Ta'álá states that the pre-conditions and the means to attain ákhirat consist of carrying out three things, and to save oneself from going contrary to these three things.

In the very beginning, O mu'min, by virtue of you being a mere human with human frailties, you will experience fatigue. However, seeing that you have already given pre-eminence to the ákhirat on the basis of its value and it being worthy of attaining, you will tolerate the fatigue that presents initially. You will bear the burden of toil that presents initially. You will persevere until, by continuous exertion – what is the word in English? "Practise?" – by continuous practise, what will it become? The exertion will disappear and a stage will be reached when your liver will be rent apart, your liver will erupt, if you were to discard that performance. At this stage that exertion that was part of your temperament, has now become part of your nature.

Alláh Ta'álá is stating that there are two concepts which He is placing in front of you. One is "tazkíyah" and the other is "tazakká".

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۙ

Successful are those who have made tazkíyah of [purified] their nafs. (S.91.9)

This was discussed briefly yesterday. In attaining this purification, initially there will be toil, there will be fatigue. However, by degrees, slowly, slowly, slowly, because it is of value and it being worthy of being pursued, it will not remain as zakkáhá, but it will be:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكّىٰ ۙ

Successful are those whose tazkíyah has taken place (S.87.14.)

So, initially there is tazkíyah and finally there is tazakká. That tazakká for the ákhirat was initially tazkíyah and finally became tazakká: that is, it became part of his nature.

Three things commanded by Alláh Ta'álá

What are those three things commanded by Alláh Ta'álá, the three things which have to be carried out continuously, to continuously refrain from discarding them and to make them part and parcel of one's nature? They are:

Firstly:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۙ

Successful are those who have made tazkíyah of [purified] their nafs.

In this first one are the two aspects explained just now: tazkíyah and tazakká. That person has reached his goal, that person has succeeded, who has achieved tazakká.

Secondly:

وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهٖ

And the one who has made zikr of the name of his Rabb.

Thirdly:

فَصَلّٰى

And has performed namáz.

All three have to be performed punctually and continuously.

Do you understand what the first item is? It is tazkíyah. The meaning of tazkíyah is to abstain from beliefs ('aqá'id) which are "filthy" (ghabíth) and a character (akhláq) which is "filthy". The word "tazkíyah" means "to cleanse" and is derived from the word "zakát", which means "pákí" (purification/ cleansing).

From this it is apparent that he has some impurity (ná-pákí) in him. If he was pure from beforehand and there was no trace of impurity in him, why has Alláh Ta'álá stated the following?

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكّٰهَا ۙ

Tahsíle-hásil (superfluity) explained

Are you madrasah graduates listening? Do you understand the reasoning? Ponder over it!

Let me explain it this way: If a child is mischievous, he will be told: "Don't be mischievous!" If he is not mischievous, why should one tell him: "Don't be mischievous!"? According to the rules of logic, it would be superfluous to instruct someone to obtain what is already in his possession. You have studied logic?

Let me give you another illustration: I have some rupees in my hand. Somebody tells me: "Go and obtain some rupees!" I now transfer the rupees from my right hand to my left hand and then back to my right hand from my left hand, then will this be a mockery or not? I already possess rupees and for me to be then told to obtain rupees, would be superfluous.

Do you now understand the logic? The brothers from London, do you understand Urdú or not?

The above illustrations demonstrate the concept of something being superfluous (tahsíle-hásil), which is prohibited on theoretical grounds.

Yes, if a person has what appear to be rupees, but they are counterfeit, then one may tell him: "Obtain some rupees." If he says: "But I do have rupees," then he will be told: "Obtain some genuine rupees. Show the ones

that you have to somebody who is an expert in this field and you will then see that what you have is counterfeit and not genuine rupees." So, he does not really have money. He will then be told to replace the counterfeit money for genuine money. Then only will he be said to have money.

Similarly, a person may say: "I have ímán." Arè! You have ímán? First, have a look at those with beautiful ímán, those with ímán of a high quality, then you will be able to gauge whether you have ímán in you or not. Arè! You are mistaking counterfeit ímán for genuine ímán. You are calling tainted ímán pure ímán. Replace it because you do not possess true ímán. The aim is to possess true ímán.

Do you now understand the point concerning superfluity (tahsíle-hásil)?

What has Záte-Bárí Ta'álá said? He stated that successful is that person who has achieved tazkíyah. It follows that that he has no tazkíyah in him as yet. Záte-Bárí Ta'álá is directing his attention in the direction of tazkíyah. What was that which I had said were contrary to tazkíyah? They were corrupt 'aqá'id which were in you. Remove these corrupt 'aqá'id and instil the proper category of correct 'aqá'id in you. Eradicate the corrupt beliefs and replace them with superb, exquisite and fine 'aqá'id. One's temperament, one's being has to be purified from corrupt 'aqá'id. This aspect is related to the heart. The heart has to be cleansed of corrupt 'aqá'id. This was the first point.

This second aspect is also related to purity (pákí). What is that? It is to cleanse oneself from ill behaviour (ghabíthe-akhláq). Just as 'aqá'id are related to the bátin, similarly akhláq is also related to the bátin and not to the limbs and organs of the human body. The locus of ímán is the heart and the locus of good character is also the heart. Both are, thus, connected to the bátin and not to the záhir.

That is why Záte-Bárí Ta'álá commanded that one should cleanse oneself from corrupt 'aqá'id and cleanse oneself from a corrupt akhláq. This is fardh. This is the basis for success. This is the reason that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم established pure beliefs in place of corrupt beliefs, this being referred to as ímán. Thereafter, the corrupt habits that were in the Arabs of that time were embellished with ne'mal-badl – a better substitute, namely,

akhláqe-hasanah, akhláqe-hamídah, akhláqe-pákízah, akhláqe-suthre, akhláqe-munazzah.

[These are different terms used to describe different aspects of a good character – Tr.]

It required thirteen years of effort to establish these good qualities in the sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم. Otherwise, what was the need? Corrupt beliefs were eliminated in one minute and replaced with correct and pure beliefs. But one minute was not sufficient to remove the corrupt akhláq which was firmly embedded in the Arabs. It required the duration of the Makkan era, thirteen years, and not just a few minutes, to remove this.

To remove and purify corrupt ’aqá’id only a few minutes or a few hours are required. However, how can one hour or a few hours, one day or four days be sufficient to remove corrupt akhláq? For this, an extremely high degree of forbearance and sabr need to be established, then will a corrupt akhláq be eliminated and a purified akhláq attained.

Do you understand?

We are still discussing the first command of Alláh Ta’álá, namely tazkíyah. For attaining success for the valued ákhirat and for the quest of ákhirat, one has to terminate corrupt beliefs and also free oneself from corrupt behaviour.

Still expanding on this, let us take the case of the mu’min who has managed to attain those aspects pertaining to ímán, namely purification of ’aqá’id, but the radiance (núrániyet) that was supposed to come into his heart from the process of purification, has not come into him. This núrániyet will not appear until the corrupt akhláq is not removed and replaced with a good akhláq. The corrupt ’aqá’id may have gone, but the purity and the núrániyet that were supposed to have entered, have not entered as yet.

Take this illustration: Your clothes have become dirty. You wash off the filth, what was ghabíth, but see whether the necessary lustre has been achieved or not. Should not lustre also be present? If it is not present, should you not have used the correct method for the cleansing process? Definitely, this should have been done.

So, the corrupt ’aqá’id having gone, there should also be goodness that should have appeared. Just as the physical body requires good nutrition,

in a like manner rúhání nutrition also needs to be good (tayyib). Just as the corrupt ’aqá’id have been removed, with it remove also the corrupt akhláq – make its tazkíyah. Then combine this tazkíyah of the akhláq with the tazkíyah of the ’aqá’id. The former is related to the bátin and the latter is also related to the bátin. In this way both bátiní forces have been combined.

What is the first point with regard to attaining success? It is tazkíyah. In other words, it is to remove corrupt ’aqá’id and to remove a corrupt akhláq – so that núr can enter the heart and this núr can reach perfection, resulting in núr upon núr. You yourselves speak about “Núrun-alá-núr.” Tayyib ímán has entered and a tayyib akhláq has also entered. When these two good qualities combine, then the result becomes “super-good”.

The first point was tazkíyah. Do you understand what tazkíyah is? Yes?

We now come to the second point:

Alláh Ta’álá is now saying: “Do not sit back complacent at this.” Those qualities which I have explained are connected to the heart. In regard to them Alláh Ta’álá is saying: “Do not sit back complacent at having attained these. Adopt those methods that will see to the preservation and continuation of them.” These qualities have come into existence. They were non-existent. Now, they are in existence. The corrupt ’aqá’id have gone. The qualities of a corrupt akhláq have gone. In opposition to these, other qualities have come into existence. Now comes the question of maintaining these.

Maintaining youth and honouring parents

To attain something, though it may be difficult, is not as difficult as preserving and maintaining it. Or, do you think it is easy? Of course, it is difficult.

Take the onset of youth: The father and mother have worked very hard to earn and feed you. They ate afterwards – the parents feed the child first, the best that they can afford. The mother would say: “I will eat the leftovers. You go ahead and enjoy yourself.”

My dear children! You have reached adolescence. Now you have to preserve and maintain that youth. Seeing adolescence has come into existence, do

you think it is easy to preserve and maintain that adolescence? It is not easy! The challenge is to bring vitality to that youth. There are adolescents sitting here, or are you all old men? Most of you are adolescents. Safeguard that adolescence. Acknowledge the favours of your parents on you. They sweated blood and tears to earn and feed you. Now that you have attained adolescence, be grateful to them. Value them. Honour and respect them. Listen to them and obey them. Who can be more concerned about your welfare than your mother and father? You do not love your own life as much as your mother and father do.

Just now I had stated that Alláh Ta'álá states: "O mu'min! You do not love your life as much as I, also Mu'min, have love for your life." Did I not mention this just now? So, Alláh Ta'álá is the Rabbe-Haqíqí – the real and true nourisher and cherisher – whereas the father is the rabbe-majází – the substitute nourisher and cherisher. It is written that he is the qiblah-dárain – the qiblah of both the worlds.

So, O youth! You do not have as much love for your own life as much as your mother and father have love for your life. When you developed a small boil, you were inexperienced, while your mother and father were experienced. They knew what could happen. They sent you to consult the doctor. Treat it at its commencement. It should not happen that it worsens and you need to have a major operation. This is mentioned just incidentally.

I was saying that for something to come into existence may be difficult, but more difficult is the preservation and the maintenance of that item.

The second factor leading to success

So, Alláh Ta'álá states the second factor:

وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهٖ

And the one who has made zikr of the name of his Rabb.

Take note that the word used is "Rabb" (cherisher and nourisher) and not "Iláh" (deity).

To remind you, Alláh Ta'álá had stated:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۙ

That person has attained success who has attained purification – tazakká. Note that here it does not state zakkáhá, one who purifies himself, which was stated elsewhere.

However, do not be proud of that state of purification. Its preservation and maintenance are still necessary. Your Rabb is everywhere. Turn to Him. Supplicate unto Him: wa zakarasma rabbihí.

So, what is the second point? Make the zikr of your Rabb continuously. "Ism" means "name". Take the name of your Rabb continuously. Not merely to take the name of your Rabb, but to take His name continuously. It is not a matter of taking His name today and then leaving it tomorrow, but to take His name all the time; to take the name of your Rabb continuously. That is why Alláh Ta'álá and Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم have stated that your tongue should be kept moist with the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá:

لَا يَزَالُ لِسَانُكَ رَطْبًا مِّنْ ذِكْرِ اللهِ

Keep your tongue moist with the name of Alláh Ta'álá.

In other words: continuously. "Lá-yazálu" means that it should not terminate. In other words: all the time.

O children, do you understand? Keep your tongues moist with the zikr, with the name of Alláh Ta'álá. Do you take it that it means to sit for only half an hour or fifteen minutes in zikr? Not at all. That half an hour or fifteen minutes is training for continuous zikr, not merely for zikr for that period only.

Therefore, keep on making an assessment of that muráqabah and of that zikr which you have made for that short period. Ask yourself whether continuity has been achieved or not? Ask yourself: "When I stood up from my muráqabah and my zikr and I was going about with my duties, had that muráqabah still remained with me? Was that zikr still continuing on my tongue, or was it only temporarily there while I sat?" You remembered whilst you were sitting in zikr but not afterwards. Assess yourself.

Do you understand?

You come and sit here and then go away. This is deception. You should take stock all the time. Take stock at every step and all the time. The meaning

of zikr is yád, which is with the tongue and it is also in the heart. Alláh Ta'álá has stated in the Qur'án Sharíf:

فَاذْكُرُوا اللهَ قِيٰمًا وَّقُعُوْدًا وَّعَلٰى جُنُوْبِكُمْ ۚ

Make the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá while standing, sitting and reclining. (S.4.103.)

At another place Alláh Ta'álá states:

وَسَبِّحُوْهُ بُكْرَةً وَّأَصِيْلًا ۝

And glorify Him morning and evening. (S.33.42.)

"Morning and evening" is a way of saying "all the time".

So, Záte-Bárí Ta'álá is saying the same thing; and Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is also saying the same thing that Alláh Ta'álá is saying, namely that the heart and the tongue should be kept moist all the time in the yád and with the name of Alláh Ta'álá.

We have thus dealt with the second aspect of attaining success. By success we refer to perfect success. In any activity, a temporary success has no credence. Take this illustration: A person invests 100,000 rupees in a venture and he gets back 150,000 rupees. If this profit accrues every time then there is credibility that the venture is profitable. If, on the other hand, there is a return of 150,000 rupees on the one day and the next day the whole amount is lost, can one say that the venture is profitable? Of course not. Therefore, understand what the objective is. If the objective has been attained, success has been attained.

So, in our context, what is success? Here we are speaking about permanent success – attaining complete and perfect success. To attain this, Alláh Ta'álá has stated that three things are required.

To recapitulate: The first factor had two components: for corrupt 'aqá'id to be removed and be replaced by sound 'aqá'id; and for a corrupt akhláq to be removed and be replaced by a good akhláq, which is connected with the internal, the bátin, the heart, and not with the organs and parts of the body. These have been discussed in some detail.

The second factor is:

وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهٖ

And the one who has made zikr of the name of his Rabb.

Its connection is also with the bátin. However, from one aspect this is connected to the external also: the tongue is part of the body, even though it is not openly so like the nose or the hands, which are quite visible externally.

The tongue is not visible ordinarily. Only when the mouth is open will madam tongue be visible. Otherwise, she is in purdah (concealed), inside the mouth. There are barriers in front, above and below – the teeth. Beyond these barriers are protecting walls, these being the lips, one on top and one at the bottom. These walls have confined madam tongue in her house. What is this house of hers? It is the mouth. She is fearful of venturing from it because the teeth are spikes in front. She should proceed with caution. It should not happen that that she is impaled by these spikes. The tongue does get bitten at times. She may be saved from being impaled but it should not happen that she is caught between the two walls in front – the lips –and she suffers discomfort. She has escaped being impaled but has not saved herself from being crushed.

Do you understand?

The gender of the tongue (zabán) – is it masculine or feminine? Seeing that the tongue has been said to be feminine in gender and is kept in such purdah, for that entity who is completely feminine – that is, woman – to be in the house and to stay in the house would be even more applicable (bi-taríqe-úlá). Is that not so? Should she venture out of her house, would she not be impaled also, that her honour is impaled and she suffers disgrace?

When the tongue, which is feminine in gender, is kept in its house, then this is a nazír (appropriateness/ resemblance), so that which is completely feminine, meaning woman, should be restricted to the house even to a greater degree (bi-taríqe úlá). She should stay in the house and not be allowed out because, should her feet move out of the house today, then you will not find her at home again.

Wisdom from a villager

I am reminded of something. Some time back there were no busses and such types of transport. Traveling was by means of oxcart. I had to go to a place

called Charthawal. The oxcart came to fetch us. With me was a molvísáhib, Mauláná Sayyid Ábed Husain Sáhib, marhúm, who was popularly known as Chote Molvísáhib. So, both of us proceeded to Charthawal. On the way we had to pass a place called Lohárí. As we were passing this place, the driver of the oxcart stopped and said: "Hadhratjí, I have not puffed on a huqqah since early this morning. If I have your permission, may I go and smoke one now? I'll just draw two puffs and I'll be back." There was an old man sitting some distance away pulling on a huqqah. I replied: "Yes, yes. Go ahead and have a couple of puffs." He went.

There was a considerable delay in his returning. When he returned I said: "Bháí, how come it took you so long to pull only two puffs?" He replied: "Hadhratjí, the reason it took so long is that husband and wife were fighting with one another. Both the husband and wife are old and they were quarrelling with one another. The one said something then the other said something. The poor husband spoke very little but the wife had a lot to say." I said to him: "Ofo! The woman had much more to say?" He responded: "Yes, Hadhratjí! This is something you should ask us about! What is there to ask? Well, the nature of a woman is such. The nature of a woman is such that the moment her foot leaves the house then, Hadhratjí, you will not find her at home anymore." This is what the villager was telling me that the nature of women is such that the moment they step out of the house you will not find them at home any more.

The villager had a well-balanced mind. He understood the feminine species very well. He understood women very well. He was uttering the same sentiments that Záte-Bárí Ta'álá has stated. The villager had a simple mind, uncorrupted. He drew a straightforward drawing.

So, you can see that Alláh Ta'álá has drawn a resemblance between the tongue and women. When you mention "zabán", you will use the feminine gender, making it definitely female.

The tongue is záhir in one aspect and it is bátin in another aspect. Similarly, zikre-lisání (zikr made verbally) is also záhir from one aspect and it is bátin from another aspect, that is, remembrance in the heart.

"*Wazakrasma-rabbihi*" – "ism" means "name". Thus we have the following:

اللهُ اللهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلاَّ اللهُ سُبْحَانَ اللهِ سُبْحَانَ اللهِ اَلْحَمْدُاللهِ اللهُ اَكْبَرُ

اللهُ اَكْبَرُ سُبْحَانَ اللهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ سُبْحَانَ اللهِ الْعَظِيْمِ

And so forth.

Is this not taking the name of your Rabb? So, what is the second thing? It is to take the name of your Rabb all the time, continuously. Just like the 'aqá'id bátiní was for all times and not for a short while only – corrupt 'aqá'id and akhláq have to be removed until death – in exactly the same way one has to make zikr of one's Rabb continuously, and not just for a temporary time period.

O my brothers! O seekers of self-purification – tálibáne-tazkíyah! O my honoured muhájirín – you have left your homes to come here, therefore muhájirín! O tálibáne-Sulúk mujáhidín! Have you understood the issues discussed?

Now, take the situation where there is zikr made with the tongue, but there is no dhiyán, yád, thought or picturing of Alláh Ta'álá in the heart, then too this will be considered to be zikre-lisání. On the other hand, there is zikre-qalbí – there is zikr in the heart – but there is no zikr with the tongue, from one aspect there is zikr but one can be deceived. In this situation, seeing that the tongue does not move in zikr, the tongue being a physical item capable of movement, whereas the thought of Alláh Ta'álá in the heart is not something that has substance, it being metaphysical, one can be deceived at times. One may think that there is yád in the heart when, in actual fact, there is no yád in the heart.

Therefore, seeing that this zikr in the heart is intangible, together with zikre-qalbí, together with the yád and the dhiyán, one should also make zikr with the tongue, whose movement is physical and tangible. When, at any time, through some worldly need, one has to engage in speech, at that time the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá is not directly with the tongue, but the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá is by virtue of zikre-qalbí through muráqabah. This will happen because of having previously practised on this.

Do you understand?

So, continuous zikre-qalbí and zikre-lisání are objectives to attain. We have now dealt with the second aspect of attaining success. Success is an

objective with every individual. The success that is meant is everlasting success and not temporary success. It is success in relation to the ákhirat and not worldly success. This is to be kept in mind very well that permanent success is an objective, and that success is related to the ákhirat.

The third item – salát

We now come to the third aspect: “Fasallá.” That is, keep on performing namáz.

وَذَكَرَ اسْمَ رَبِّهٖ فَصَلّٰى

Kindly note that it is not “Thumma-sallá” but it is “Fa-sallá.” There is a difference grammatically. It means not just to follow-up with namáz but it means to perform namáz on an on-going basis.

I am speaking to the children here who are students of Dín. I am also a tálibe-’ilm.

Namáz falls into different categories. Some namáz are at the level of fardh; some are at the level of wájib; and some are at the level of mustahab, which we refer to as nafl. As for the namáz that are nafl, there is no time specified for them, except that they should not be performed at the rising of the sun, at noon exactly, at the setting of the sun, after Fajr and after Asr. It is forbidden to perform nafl at these five times. Besides these five times, there is no specified time for nafl. In other words, perform nafl whenever your heart desires to do so, provided that there is no harm to your necessary worldly affairs and, as far as your necessary Díní tasks are concerned, those that take priority in that those that are wájib to carry them out, that there is no interference in performing them. nafl may be performed at all times.

Basically, namáz is performed by bodily means. One stands on one’s feet; one’s hands are utilised; the body bends forward in rukú’ and then straightens itself; one sits down; and the eyes do not wander here and there; or do they? So, there is zikr in the performance of the arkán (different postures) of the body and its various parts, with the proper sequence of movements.

Before the namáz, healthy ’aqá’id were mentioned, and also a good akhláq,

and then the zikr of your Rabb; and all these are to found in salát. In namáz we find that correct ’aqá’id and a good akhláq are combined. With both these, the salát is now comprehensive. This namáz is also continuous. It is not such that one performs it the one day and discards it the next; that one performs it for one waqt and one does not perform it at the next waqt.

One other point: The continuity of the performance of any action varies. If I were to ask you: “Sir, did you perform your Eid namáz?” What will you reply? Is your answer: “Sometimes,”? No. You will say: “Always.” If I were then to ask you: “Did you read it yesterday? Did you read it today?” The answer is: “Of course not!” Seeing that you have not performed Eid namáz yesterday and today, how can it be said that you perform it always? It is obvious that “continuous” is different for every task.

Namáz is also to be continuous. It appears in the Hadíth Sharíf:

اِنْتِظَارُالصَّلٰوةِ صَلٰوةٌ

It is termed *“murábitah”*. In other words: To be in anticipation of namáz is also in the order (hukman) of being in namáz.

The same thing has been written in the tafsír by Allámah Baidháwí رحمة الله عليه.

Take this example: After you performed your Fajr namáz you became involved in your necessary worldly activities, for which there is permission and rukhsat. However, every moment you have this concern: “It must not happen that I get so involved in this work that I miss out on Zuhr namáz, that I miss out on performing it with jamá’at.” One assumes that you are in the position where it is incumbent on you to perform your namáz with jamá’at. You may be a farmer busy ploughing the land; you may be working in your shop; or you may be an employee in an office; but the thought of Zuhr namáz is in front of you all the time. As such, you are in salát all the time – “intizáro salát, salát.” This explains the concept of being in salát all the time.

When the salát is performed in this comprehensive manner, with jamá’at (where applicable), with ’aqá’id being corrected, with akhláq being corrected, with the correct zikre-lisání and zikre-qalbí, then Záte-Bárí Ta’álá focuses His attention towards this mussallí with His special bounty.

The reason is that at that particular moment the person performing his namáz has incorporated both factors necessary for success into his namáz. He has attained completeness. Thus, the special gaze of bounty is directed at him from Záte-Bárí Ta'álá's side. Is the special bounteous gaze of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá not something one should desire? That special bounteous gaze is focused especially in the state of salát. So, is salát something to be discarded, seeing that it is the means of attaining the special bounteous gaze of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá?

Shall I present the proof of this? The reason I ask is that I fear very much the muftis of these days. I am even more scared of the general populace. Also, I am even more scared of western educated individuals.

The journey of Me'ráj

Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم went on the journey of Me'ráj, which was a means of an increase in the progress of his nabúwat, an increase in his progress of risálat, and the method of an increase in his elevation of his nabúwat. "Me'ráj" is a derivative of "'urúj" – instrumental in elevation. This 'urúj is termed progress. Nabúwat in itself denotes progress. There is no greater status or position than it. Then, too, there is progress in it by means of Me'ráj.

Do you understand this point?

As for that individual who is neither a nabí nor a sahábí, he should, even to a higher degree, desire to progress. Is there no need to progress? Of course, there is. So, ponder over it. It is for this reason that Alláh Ta'álá has said that salát is Me'ráj: *As-salátu me'rájul-mu'minín*. It is a gift presented. I will not go into that now.

To continue: Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم is on the journey of Me'ráj. Hadhrat Jibríl علیه السلام is accompanying him. They journey across the seven heavens. They finally reach the place called Sidratul-Muntahá. Hadhrat Jibríl علیه السلام stopped here and said: "I am not worthy or capable of proceeding farther with you. I could only accompany you up to this point. Now the affair is between you and Alláh Ta'álá."

Let me place an illustration in front of you: I cannot say whether this still takes place in the families of the nobility and the important people.

It is possible that it still happens. In any case, it is the day of the wedding. The groom's nikáh has taken place and he has brought his wife home. The womenfolk receive the bride with great excitement, fussing over her. There is no way that the groom can enter the house. He is left out in the cold and has to kick his heels around. Night falls. One by one the womenfolk go back to their own homes. The household folk also prepare to go to their own quarters to go and sleep. The house is empty and the poor groom is left stranded. He has not been told what the arrangements are and which room has been prepared for him in the palatial house.

However, the mama, the servant – she is the in-between – comes to his rescue. She knows in which room the bride has been settled. How could the menfolk know? The groom's father knows nothing either! The groom's mother knows but she feels too shy to direct her son. So, the mama, the servant, goes to the groom and says: "Mi'yán! Come with me. The bride is awaiting. Come." She proceeds and he tags along. She reaches the room where the bride is and stands at the door of the closed room. She addresses the groom: "It was my duty to bring you this far. I cannot proceed farther." She knew that the groom himself will take her to task were she to go in with him. How could she go farther? So, she herself is saying: "I may not step farther. Now, the affair is between you and your wife."

To continue: Having reached Sidratul-Muntahá, Hadhrat Jibríl عليه السلام could not proceed farther and he returned, leaving Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم in seclusion with Alláh Ta'álá. When Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم tried to step forward, Alláh Ta'álá commanded him to stop: Alláh Ta'álá was in salát! This is stated in "Nashrut-Tíbb" – you may refer to it.

People are amazed and confused when they read this. "How can Alláh Ta'álá be in namáz? What does this Hadíth Sharíf mean?" The meaning of it is that Záte-Bárí Ta'álá was directing His special attention on Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم in order that he could be equipped to speak to Alláh Ta'álá and for His visualisation (dídár/ ru'namáí).

Do you understand the point made?

There is a Fársí couplet, mentioned to you previously, where a questioner asks: "What is the Qur'áne-Pák?" The person replying said that Záte-Bárí Ta'álá knew how much muhabbat the mu'min has for Him, and that the

mu'min would want to see Him. Therefore, Alláh Ta'álá revealed His Kaláme-Pák for the mu'min to visualise Him. Záte-Bárí Ta'álá sent the Qur'án Sharíf to the people for them to visualise their nourisher and cherisher. How great is not His bounty! As one who is in love will say: "If I cannot see you, hearing your voice will suffice."

So, when Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم wanted to step forward, Záte-Bárí Ta'álá commanded him to wait: He was in salát. The One whom Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was proceeding to see, was in salát. In other words, He was focusing His special attention on Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم in order that he may proceed with ease, that there may be greater capability and accommodation for the visualisation of Alláh Ta'álá. "Alláh Ta'álá is in salát" in this context means that His special attention is being focused.

So, this salát of ours – this namáz of ours – was presented as a gift on the occasion of Me'ráj. This is a special focusing from Záte-Bárí Ta'álá on the one performing namáz. The one performing namáz, from his side, is focusing his special attention towards Alláh Ta'álá from his heart (qalbí):

اَنْ تَعْبُدَ اللهَ كَاَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ فَاِنْ لَّمْ تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَاِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ

Worship Alláh as if you are seeing Him (because) even though you may not be able to see Him, He is seeing you.

Do you understand?

So far we have understood the following: Namáz has now become all-encompassing. Also, to be in anticipation of the next namáz after performing the one namáz, is like being in namáz. In other words, namáz is now virtually continuous. So, correct 'aqá'id, a good akhláq and zikr are on a continuous basis, in the same way salát has also become continuous. Therefore, at no moment in time is one free of correct 'aqá'id, free of a praiseworthy akhláq, free of the zikr of one's Rabb and free of namáz. Continuity in all these three is the objective.

It is only through the fadhl and karam of Alláh Ta'álá, the barkat of my Hadhratwálá (may Alláh Ta'álá fill his qabr with núr) and the mediation (tufail) of all of you that Záte-Bárí Ta'álá is causing me to speak in this manner. Have those of you who are resident here, ever heard it in this

manner that Záte-Bárí Ta'álá is causing me to explain to you? This is no achievement on my part.

By attributing any good to oneself, 'ujub will enter and takabbur will be evidenced. As I mentioned previously, how can one have 'ujub? How can one show takabbur? How can one attribute this good amal to oneself? Is there no danger of it being snatched away? A mu'min may make mistakes but he is also repentant. So, how can this sinner look with contempt at another sinner? How can one gaze at oneself with self-admiration and self-importance?

Faná – Annihilation/ Non-existence

To continue: All the three items discussed will lead to complete success. The comprehensive form of all three items of success will be termed "faná". This is the goal. Then, how can there be 'ujub and how can there be takabbur?

We should take a lesson from the glow-worm, the fire-fly. At night one sees the glow-worms as little lights floating in the air. When we were small we used to see the lighted glow-worms in the open and catch them. Having captured them, we used to place them in our topís and then wear the topís. Now the topís appeared lit up.

Anyhow, somebody asked the glow-worm: "Arè yár! Where do you reside the whole day? You are visible at night but you are not to be seen during daytime." The glow-worm replied: "I stay here day and night. Where else is there to stay except in this wilderness? However, in the presence of the sun I am such as if I have no existence."

Sheikh Sádí رحمة الله عليه states: "O insán mu'min! Your noble state should also be like that. Take a lesson from the glow-worm, which is saying: 'I may be glittering but what can I do? When the sun makes its appearance it is as if I was not born at all.'"

O mu'min! Similarly, you have definitely been created but the awe and majesty of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá should be so firmly embedded in your heart that you should be non-existent in front of Him. The technical term for this state is "faná".

Faná and wahdatul-wujúd

Now, in each and every task the mu'min bandah adopts this approach of faná. You may argue and say: "How can this be faná, because when he is lying down his feet are spread out. When he went to sit his legs were taking him to his seat. When he is talking his tongue is in motion. When he is handing something over or when he is taking something into his hands, his hands are moving. Can this be non-existence (faná)? These motions are proof of existence (baqá)."

Not at all! Not at all! This baqá of his has been attained by means of faná. The end result is this baqá. All these movements are carried out subservient to the orders of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá. These motions are executing His orders. These are not deviating from His orders. When there is no deviation from His orders, then there is obedience and execution of His orders. This then is that very faná that he has discarded his own desires. He has abandoned his physical desires. And whatever desires he is fulfilling are done subservient to the orders of Alláh Ta'álá. Thus his every tranquil state and every motion are in the ambience of faná.

Summary of the majlis

Thus, the rank (maqám) of the mu'min is that of maqáme-faná. This has been explained in Sharí'at terms as:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ تَزَكّٰى

وَذَكَرَاسْمَ رَبِّهٖ فَصَلّٰى ؕ

He has reached the point of success – success has been attained to a full degree – by that person who has these three qualities in him: he has correct 'aqá'id (he has purified himself of corrupt 'aqá'id) and he has embellished himself with a good akhláq (he has purified himself of a corrupt akhláq and it has become part of his nature); he is taking the name of his Rabb continuously; and he is engaged in performing namáz punctually and regularly. This person has attained success.

With the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá, with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه I have expounded, with some detail, the following: Everyone is desirous of success. And by success is meant complete and perfect success, that is, success which is permanent. Záte-Bárí Ta'álá has laid down the method in the three things stated above, that insán should be firm on these on a continuous basis till the time of death.

Du'á

May Alláh Ta'álá give us the taufíq for us to keep firm on these three items until death.

آمِيْن يَا رَبَّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

Khudá háfiz.

Ámín

وَاٰخِرُدَعْوَانَااَنِ الْحَمْدُلِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

Khudá háfiz.

BOOKLET NUMBER TWENTY ONE

Safar 1431 – February 2010

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh, solely with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه and the du'ás of well-wishers, this booklet, For Friends Booklet Number Twenty One, is being presented.

In this majlis Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه discusses some very basic concepts, but this is done in a very unique manner. Basically, a Muslim has to abstain from certain beliefs and actions, which are termed manhí-anhá (what one is prohibited from), and he has to adhere to certain concepts and perform certain deeds, which are called ma'múr-bihá (what one has been commanded to do). This is easier said than done! There are many issues surrounding these two instructions. Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه details these issues

in this majlis. One issue is that of one's intention, what is called niyet. We are all aware that one's intentions have to be correct. However, Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه delves deep into this topic and brings out aspects which many of us are probably unaware of.

It must also be remembered that this majlis was conducted in the month of Ramadhán 1412 and it is one of those which were conducted in the last Ramadhán that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه spent with us in this world. This makes this majlis very significant, together with all those majális that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه conducted in the last part of his life.

A number of technical terms are used by Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه in this majlis. Readers may or may not be familiar with these terms. However, in order to benefit fully from this majlis, some of these terms have been retained in their original and their meanings have been inserted after the words in the text for easy reference. The glossary also has these words included.

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us the taufíq to act according to the teachings of Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه.

Dr. I.M.

Kindly note that these majális are not word-for-word translations of the Urdú majális. On the other hand, care has been taken to keep as close to the Urdú as possible. The reader may come across many instances where sentences could have been composed in a better manner in English, but this would have caused the majlis to drift away from the ethos that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه wanted to convey. Therefore, the style in which Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه spoke has been maintained as far as possible. This is also the reason why the original Urdú or Arabic words used have been maintained as far as possible.

This majlis has also been translated from the recording by brother Yusuf Bulbulia and from the Urdú transcript of the tape.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه *in Jalálábád, India, on Tuesday, the 18th Ramadhán 1412, corresponding to the 24th March 1992.]*

THE BASES FOR ACCEPTANCE – MAQBÚLIYET

Introduction

[Those who came to Jalálábád for their isláh resided in the khánqáh. They were expected to attend the special majális that were conducted by Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه *for the sálikín.*

Those who wished to discuss any problems they were facing could discuss them verbally with Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه *or could do so in writing by writing their problems in notebooks which were then left with Hadhratjí* رحمة الله عليه *who would then append his reply in the notebooks. The notebooks would then be collected by the writers.*

Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه *commenced this particular majlis by commenting on some written notes he had received from one of the sálikín staying in the khánqáh.]*

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحْمَدَهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

Advice on corresponding

What benefit is there in using the tip of the tongue in lengthy, futile speech, and the tip of the pen in lengthy, superfluous writings? The issue is concise, but the narration is lengthy and non-beneficial (lá-yání). Page upon page has been filled but achieving nothing thereby. He has written such a long story of his household affairs and the illnesses afflicting members of the household and the treatments undertaken.

The matter is straightforward: members of the household are afflicted by illnesses. The illnesses are of such and such a nature. We are requesting du'ás. That is sufficient.

However, he goes on and on: This type of treatment was undertaken and that type of treatment was undertaken; home remedies were undertaken – all in all, a lot of money was spent, but there was no benefit from the

medications. Now he writes: "Make du'á."

The situation in the house is like this; the sister's condition is such; the wife's condition is such; this is the situation with regard to disputes amongst family members; and so forth and so forth. Further on he writes: "Make du'á."

Unnecessarily, he has filled page upon page. One does not know in what manner he has attained his Díní knowledge. One does not know how he studies the kitáb "Mukhtasar-al-Ma'ání". This is truly amazing! There is no concept of proper utilisation of time.

He goes on to write that he is in need of employment. He went to this place and he also went to another place. He even wrote out the application form. He did this and he did that; and so forth and so forth. Then he writes: "Requesting du'á."

What was the need to write all these details? His mind does not go in the direction of proper utilisation of time.

He is residing here (in the khánqáh) and he still writes in his notebook: "How is Hadhrat's health?" He stays here, he comes here and he sees me. To enquire about a person's health is for those who are absent and not for those who are present here. Yet he poses this question in his notebook. At times I reply: "I am present in front of you, face-to-face."

The notebook hardly leaves here on one day and it is presented again on the following day! So, what is the purpose of attending the majlis? What is achieved by it? There is no inclination to practise. There is no capacity to apply, to put into practice. This is so despite being a sáhibe-'ilm (scholar). This is destruction of one's time.

Ikhtiyárí & ghair-ikhtiyárí

Some other person – the poor chap – writes: "I had written that it was my habit to eat to my heart's content. Hadhrat had replied to my statement and wrote, 'One should eat only to the extent of filling one's stomach.'"

That is correct. One should not eat to one's heart's content. So, the poor fellow wrote: "I am unable to stop myself from eating to my heart's content." Do you see? What a great quest (talab) he has! "I am unable to stop myself from eating to my heart's content." What a great seeker (tálib) is he!

He has come here self-opinionated. He has not come here with the intention to obey (ittiba'). The poor fellow! What a great seeker is he! He considers a voluntary (ikhtiyárí) action to be involuntary (ghair-ikhtiyárí). An important principle is being enunciated here.

Somebody writes: "I am unable to abstain from bid-nazar (looking with evil intent at the opposite sex)." He has not undertaken any treatment. He writes: "I am unable to abstain from bid-nazar." He is studying as well. He further writes: "I am unable to stop myself from such and such a fault." Why did he leave his home? He should have stayed at home. He also writes: "I do perform my fardh and wájib, but I am unable to perform nafl." What should one write to him? What else can one write except to ask: "Why not?" That is, why is he unable to perform nafl? What are the obstacles? And so forth.

Faculty of resolve – qúwate-ikhtiyárí-irádí

Alláh Ta'álá has given mankind the faculty or power of voluntary resolve (qúwate-ikhtiyárí-irádí) and made mankind His creation. Mankind was not made into stone and sent here. Mankind has not being given a temperament that is like water or one that is like a rock. Water will flow according to the decline in the gradient. It will not flow upwards or in any other direction. This poor fellow is saying that his temperament is like that of water, that it has not the power to be resolute, that he is unable to lift his step in another direction. He goes along in whichever direction the flow is. He is unable to go even in the direction of what is fardh, the poor fellow. He is virtually stating: "My temperament is like that of a rock." Wherever a rock falls, it settles there. Full stop.

In actual fact, a rock even has the essence of movement. Alláh Ta'álá has stated the basis in the following áyet:

لَوْ أَنْزَلْنَا هٰـذَا الْقُرْاٰنَ عَلٰى جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْتَهٗ خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللهِ ؕ

Had We sent down this Qur'án on a mountain, verily, you would have seen it humbled, split asunder from the fear of Alláh. S59.21

However, this insán – moreover one who claims to be a tálib, as is evidenced by him setting out for his isláh – this poor fellow is saying: "Yes, the rock

may have some such qualities, but my condition is worse than that of a rock. The rock may have the quality of hijrat (migration) from the aspect of khushú', from the aspect of tasada' and from the aspect of khashyatilláh, but I do not have these in me. I am worse than that rock." This is what the poor fellow is saying by relating his condition (be-zubáne-hál). This is the purport of his writings.

Is my voice reaching you, brothers? Is it not reaching you? This is the meaning derived from what he has written. So, he has now levelled criticism against the Being (Zát) of Alláh Ta'álá.

He has followed his temperament to such an extent that even the rock feels ashamed! He has given in to his temperament and become subservient to it that even the rock feels ashamed. This is a fine type of hijrat he has made that, in connection with his hijrat, what is the rock feeling? It is feeling ashamed! The rock is censuring him! The rock is saying: "I am better than you! O insán Muslim, one claiming to have talab – one who claims to be seeking his isláh – I am better than you!"

Ponder over what this faqír is saying. What is this khádim of yours saying? I am saying that the rock is saying: "There is hijrat in me but there is no hijrat in you!" What is your temperament like, that you have left your home and you have come to a place like this but the craving of the nafs you are unable to discard. The poor fellow's addiction cannot be cast off. "I am unable to abstain from eating to my heart's content." The craving of the nafs has become such an addiction.

[There was a long pause at the end of which Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه *was troubled by a bout of coughing. He then continued.]*

My coughing is severe. Mostly, I can control the coughing.

Physical illnesses are ghair-ikhtiyárí – their onset is also ghair-ikhtiyárí and their cure is also ghair-ikhtiyárí. The treatment may be ikhtiyárí but the cure is ghair-ikhtiyárí. On the contrary are nafsání illnesses: Their appearance is ikhtiyárí and their departure is also ikhtiyárí. The appearance of takabbur (arrogance) is not ghair-ikhtiyárí but is ikhtiyárí, and its removal is also ikhtiyárí. An item is recognised by its opposite. The opposite of takabbur (arrogance) is tawádh'u (humility).

’Aqá’id, niyet & a’mál in relation to maqbúliyet

Is niyet related to ikhtiyár or to ghair-ikhtiyár? It is related to ikhtiyár. A’mál, which are brought into action, are ikhtiyárí or ghair-ikhtiyárí? They are ikhtiyárí. The adoption of ’aqá’id is this ikhtiyárí or ghair-ikhtiyárí? This is ikhtiyárí. These are three fundamental items.

So, when niyet, which is connected to irádah (resolve), is ikhtiyárí whether an incorrect niyet or a correct niyet has been made, this is ikhtiyárí. Similarly with a’mále-záhirah (external actions) or a’mále-bátinah (inner actions), both can be either incorrect or correct. Similarly with ’aqá’id – these can be corrupt or correct. These are three items for which we are accountable (mukallaf). Is my voice reaching you?

To repeat: These are three fundamental items for which we are accountable. These are the pre-conditions for acceptance (qabúl) of a’mál and the acceptance (maqbúliyet) of insán. The acceptance of a’mál, the acceptance of ahwál (states), the acceptance of kaifiyát (spiritual conditions) and the acceptance of the bondsman are all dependent on these three. The above three are the bases on which there is acceptance: Should there be a corrupt intention (fasáde-niyet) or a correct intention (tashíhe-niyet) before deeds (a’mál)? Should there be corrupt deeds (fasáde-a’mál) or correct deeds (tashíhe-a’mál)? Should the beliefs be corrupt (fasáde-’aqá’id) or correct (tashíhe-’aqá’id)? It is obvious that all these should be correct and not corrupt. These are the three items: niyet, a’mál and ’aqá’id.

Is my voice reaching you?

The fundamental importance of a correct niyet

In any action there must be no intention, thought or motive except the pleasure of Alláh Ta’álá. Therefore, one should assess oneself before any act: “Why am I doing this? What is the motive behind it?” The term applied to this process is niyet. This assessment is in regard to a’mále-záhirah (external actions) and a’mále-bátinah (inner actions) or to physical habits. One has to assess in which direction one’s tabiyet (nature/ temperament) is inclining.

For example: Eating is a natural urge. So, what is the motive behind the tabiyet wanting to fulfil this urge? Is it to eat like an animal or like a human

being? Is it to eat in an animalistic manner or in a civilised manner? In what manner and why? The niyet comes in the question "Why?" And in the question "In what manner?" comes the form. Insán, being insán, he is standing and eating and he is eating while he is walking along! This is the manner in which animals eat! He has departed from ádmiyet (being civilised/ cultured). In external features he may appear to be an ádmí but he has removed himself from ádmiyet. He has not adopted the manner that he should have but he has opted for the manner of an animal.

As to why? He has a desire. He has a yearning. He has a nature that is demanding something from within, and which he is fulfilling. This is the way an animal eats, that it has no other purpose, no other goal, no other intention except to fill the stomach. Satiation and gluttony. This is the manner of eating of an animal.

Have you understood the point or not?

So, what is the difference between insán – a rational human being – and an animal? It can be deduced that, besides the intention of being part of the animal species, insán has another intention. So, this insán is now accountable for rectifying his intention (tashíhe-niyet). In other words, his motive should be correct, one which will bring about good results.

So, what is insán accountable for initially? It is the correctness of his intention. Before performing any task he should ponder on his motivation and have an awareness of the correctness of his niyet. The opposite of tashíhe-niyet is fasáde-niyet – having a corrupt intention. An item is recognised by its opposite. So, a corrupt intention will bring about discord and lawlessness (bid-amaní), whereas a correct intention will bring about peace and harmony (aman). So, by the adoption of a corrupt intention, he is desirous of discord and lawlessness. There will be fitnah, either individually or collectively.

Do you understand the point or not? Does it appear to be too subtle?

Fasáde-niyet will cause fitnah and bid-amaní. On the other hand, tashíhe-niyet will cause any corruption that may be present, to disappear and for aman to appear.

So, Záte-Bárí Ta'álá has made insán accountable to have a correct intention. Without this tashíhe-niyet no action is accepted (qabúl). If the

action is not qabúl then the person performing the action (the ámil) is also not maqbúl. Whereas the objective is that insán, one who acknowledges and accepts his Creator, should be one who is maqbúl. Thus, in order to be maqbúl in the sight of Alláh Ta'álá the first point is to have tashíhe-niyet in any task that is performed. Therefore, such a person who does not have tashíhe-niyet, does not want to be maqbúl in the sight of Alláh Ta'álá. This is because, without tashíhe-niyet, the deed is not maqbúl, and the aim is, therefore, not for acceptance of the deed. One can thus deduce that there is no desire to be maqbúl in the sight of Alláh Ta'álá.

Is my voice reaching you or not? Does this appear like something new? Ponder over it!

According to the rules of logic, this tashíhe-niyet is termed "illate-gá'iyah" (the ultimate cause). You must have studied the subject of logic. So, according to the rules of logic this is referred to as illate-gá'iyah. It is connected initially to the intellect. It is internal and not external. So, firstly, one has to nurture this internal aspect then one can expect to nurture the external. First nurture the internal state then one will be able to nurture the external state. This is called illate-gá'iyah.

The four bases of every action

Every deed has four bases: illate-gá'iyah (the ultimate cause), illate-fá'aliyah (the maker), illate-mádiyah (the material cause), and illate-súwariyah (the formal cause).

To explain these terms let us take the following illustration:

A person has an inner thought of getting some rest and comfort. It follows that there has to be a means of obtaining these. When he thought about it, he concluded that the chárpáí was the means for obtaining this comfort. This thought of the chárpáí being the means of comfort is illate-gá'iyah (the ultimate cause).

The picture of a chárpáí now is formed in the mind: How is it made? Who will make it? What are the materials used in its manufacture? He comes to know that the materials consist of a framework, legs and straps. How will the straps run? Which end will be for the feet and which end will be for the head? The strapping will be supported by the framework, which will

be made of wood, iron or even hard clay, but a framework there must be. This is illate-mádiyah (the material cause).

Now, who will assemble the straps, the legs and the framework? This will be the carpenter. This is illate-fá'aliyah (the maker).

The chárpáí will be assembled and brought forth in front of him. This is illate-súwariyah (the formal cause).

So, initially there was the concept – illate-gá'iyah. Then came the materials for its manufacture – illate-mádiyah. Then there was the person giving it a form and a shape – illate-fá'aliyah. It was then presented in its final form – illate-súwariyah. Have you now understood? So, there are four bases for everything: illate-gá'iyah, illate-mádiyah, illate-súwariyah and illate-fá'aliyah. The status of illate-gá'iyah comes first and is intellectual. The other three come afterwards and are external.

We had digressed on to this topic when it was stated that tashíhe-niyet is illate-gá'iyah. The motive in our illustration is to bring ease and comfort to oneself and to save oneself from difficulties.

Do you understand the concept?

Záte-Bárí Ta'álá is pure of illate-gá'iyah

Záte-Bárí Ta'álá is pure of this illate-gá'iyah. This brings us to the lesson of tauhíd. Being free of any blemish is stated in سُبْحَانَكَ اَللّٰهُمَّ. Alláh Ta'álá is pure and chaste of this concept that, by creating the creation, He will attain some ease and comfort, that if there was no creation, He would suffer some harm. Do you understand or not?

The topic has come to that of tauhíd, by the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá. That is why, before everything else, there is سُبْحَانَكَ اَللّٰهُمّ before everything else there is سُبْحَانَ الله. Hamd حمد (praise of Alláh Ta'álá) is attended to afterwards. Alláh Ta'álá is absolutely pure – bring this into your realm of knowledge.

So, that Being, Záte-Bárí Ta'álá, has within Himself such uniqueness and oneness (wahdániyet) that there is absolutely no motive, no illate-gá'iyah, in creating the creation and causing it to exist. If such a concept were to exist, then this would amount to shierk. Then, how can there still be oneness (wahdániyet)? How can there still be the compulsory nature of oneness?

Do you understand these concepts or not? By the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá these concepts are being enunciated.

Aman & bid-amaní and making zulm on oneself

We can conclude that, in the creation of insán and the bringing into existence of the creation Záte-Bárí Ta'álá in His Being, is pure of illate-gá'iyah. On the other hand, for the motivation of that very creation, He has made the creation responsible and accountable (mukallaf) for such orders that the creation is saved from afflictions and that the creation treads along the paths of comfort and tranquillity. Do you understand?

Insán – mankind – is being addressed. Záte-Bárí Ta'álá has made insán responsible and mukallaf of residing in peace and harmony (aman) and protect itself from disorder and anarchy (bid-amaní). He has, thus, created the resources and the means, the utilisation of which will cause peace and harmony to prevail; and the discarding of which will cause disorder and anarchy; the utilisation of which will cause comfort; and the discarding of which will cause hardship.

It is Alláh Ta'álá's mercy on mankind that in بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ He has mentioned His attributes of "rahmán" and "rahím". It is the demand of His mercy that He has created such means the utilisation of which will result in peace and harmony in mankind; and the discarding of which will result in anarchy), whether individually, collectively or jointly; and whether these pertain to the person, to the family or to the outside community.

Alláh Ta'álá has given the creation correct and very simple methods to bring about ease and comfort. If the person now acts contrary to these – if he were to put forward his own ideas and make use of his own intelligence – bid-amaní will result. Have you understood? Is my voice reaching you? Yes?

Seeing that this insán, being insán, has desired bid-amaní, Alláh Ta'álá has created bid-amaní, because He is the Creator of everything. خَالِقُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ The bid-amaní is not directly from Haqq Ta'álá. This insán had desired bid-amaní. And the creation is connected to the Creator, most high. Therefore, He created bid-amaní.

With Alláh Ta'álá there is adl (justice) or fadhl (bounty/ grace). However,

this person has made zulm on himself – he has oppressed himself. By discarding correct intention he has brought zulm on himself. This is termed bid-amaní. He himself is an oppressor in his own right. Alláh Ta'álá is ádil (just). Zulm is a defect. Remember, سُبْحَانَكَ comes first – He is pure of any defects, shortcomings and weaknesses.

This person has, thus, created shierk for himself. And shierk has in it bid-amaní. Therefore, he has become a mushrik – one who commits shierk. So, instead of one believing in the Oneness of Alláh Ta'álá (mo'ahhid) he has become a mushrik. He is proclaiming his own orders in opposition to the orders of Alláh Ta'álá. This is termed shierk. Alláh Ta'álá had created insán, in the first instance, on monotheism (wahdániyet) and established this attribute of monotheism in insán before sending insán into the world. But now he has discarded the orders of Alláh Ta'álá and adopted shierk. Shierk, in its very essence, is bid-amaní. This is why bid-amaní has spread throughout the universe.

Do you understand? Yes?

Bid-amaní has spread throughout the universe. This person has discarded the adl of the Ádil and, having brought zulm on himself, he has himself brought about bid-amaní. He is virtually saying: "This is what I wish." Very well. That is your wish that bid-amaní should spread. Therefore, your wish is being fulfilled. You have desired for yourself an oppressive creation. So, an oppressive creation has been attached to you. You are an oppressor in your own being. Not Alláh Ta'álá. Alláh Ta'álá states:

إِنَّ اللهَ لَا يَظْلِمُ النَّاسَ شَيْئًا وَلٰكِنَّ النَّاسَ أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ ۝

Verily, Alláh does not oppress mankind in any way; but human beings oppress themselves. (S.10.44.)

Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "I do not commit any oppression. Oppression is a defect. So, how could I have created insán so that oppression may reign?"

The discussion has advanced far, by the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá, by the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá. From the academic aspect, the discussion has progressed very far. Having being created a mo'ahhid, he has become a mushrik. This

is to say that Alláh Ta'álá has originally and initially created insán as a mo'ahhid – one who is a strict monotheist. By his own choice, by virtue of a corrupt intention, without tashíhe-niyet, he has brought fasád on himself. This is because his niyet is not good.

This is termed Shaitanat / Shaitániyet / Iblísíyet. What is its meaning in the dictionary? It is "sar-kashy – سرکشی – waywardness; rebelliousness", which is concomitant with fasád. So, he has himself brought on fasád. Alláh Ta'álá states:

فَمَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلٰكِنْ كَانُوْٓا أَنْفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُوْنَ ۝

It is not Allah who wronged them, but they wronged their own souls.
(S9.70.)

Coming back to the topic we had started on: Before the manifestation of an external action we have to see what the illate-gá'iyah is. Is there tashíhe-niyet? When there is tashíhe-niyet then there will be tashíh in one's actions and not fasád. Thus, when the deed manifests itself externally, then there will be aman. There is no reason for there to be fasád in one's actions once there is tashíhe-niyet. On the contrary, the deed will bring about aman. It is this very aman which is qabúl with Alláh Ta'álá. You have now understood tashíhe-niyet.

Tashíhe-a'mál

We now have to ponder over what tashíhe-a'mál is. Consider the acts that one wishes to perform. Tashíhe-a'mál is that one should see that one performs them within the boundaries that the Sharí'at has laid down. This is tashíhe-a'mál. Not to observe these limits, either from the aspect of exceeding them or not living up to them, would be considered to be exceeding the limits. When the limits are exceeded then this will not be tashíhe-a'mál. And, when there is no tashíhe-a'mál, it follows that there was no tashíhe-niyet. If there was tashíhe-niyet – what in reality is tashíhe-niyet – then in one's deeds there would have been tashíhe-a'mál. In other words, the acts would have been performed within the limits set down. That is why it is stated:

وَتِلْكَ حُدُوْدُ اللهِ ۭ

These are limits set by Allah. (S65.1.)

That is to say that these are the limits, as laid down by Alláh Ta'álá, to be observed in performing deeds. These limits should not be transgressed, neither by exceeding them nor by shortcutting them. This is termed adl (justice/ balance). This is termed i'tidál (equilibrium).

So, when will it be said that there is tashíhe-a'mál? It will be so when the acts are carried out without exceeding the limits set for them and they fall within the boundaries. Then, when the deeds are correct, then there is acceptance. However, there is a third aspect on which is dependent tashíhe-niyet and tashíhe-a'mál. What is this?

Tashíhe-'aqá'id

This third aspect is to believe in one's Creator in the correct manner that this belief should be held. In Islámic scholarly terminology it is called 'aqá'id. In common terms it is called ímán. Ímán is connected to the bátin. In the same way this bátin is connected with the inner intention (bátiní-niyet). Both are connected to the bátin. This intention, which is connected to the bátin, is depended on tashíhe-'aqá'id, also termed tashíhe-ímán. When there is tashíhe-'aqá'id then there will be tashíhe-niyet as well. When both of these exist then there will be tashíhe-a'mál as well. The acceptance of internal and external deeds will depend on the presence of these three aspects. When the deed is qabúl, then the person performing the deed is also maqbúl.

So, until insán does not present an act with tashíhe-'aqá'id, tashíhe-niyet and tashíhe-amal, he is not maqbúl. Every insán desires that he be maqbúl in the eyes of Alláh Ta'álá. This being so, then you should live as a mo'ahhid (one who strictly believes in the Oneness of Alláh Ta'álá) should live. This is dependent on believing in Záte-Bárí Ta'álá — in His Being (Zát) and His attributes (sifát) — in the correct manner Then there is no reason why there should not be tashíhe-niyet, that there is no other, separate intention. One's objective is ridhá' (the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá). We make the following du'á:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَرْضِنَا وَارْضَ عَنَّا

O Alláh! Let us be pleased with You and You be pleased with us.

This state of ridhá' is dependent on observing the limits in deeds; and tashíhe-a'mál is dependent on tashíhe-'aqá'id and on tashíhe-niyet. However, in order to perform a deed it is necessary to have knowledge of the limits that are the pre-conditions for that deed. Do you understand? Otherwise, the deed will be beyond limits.

The importance of 'ilm of the Sharí'at

Therefore, it becomes compulsory for every insán to attain 'ilme-Iláhí, which is also called Sharí'at or laws (ahkám/ qánún). So, in the first instance, insán is mukallaf for attaining 'ilme-Iláhí. Without this 'ilm there will be no tashíhe-'aqá'id, no tashíhe-niyet and no tashíhe-a'mál. If these are not there, how will his deeds be qabúl? If the deeds are not accepted then how can he be maqbúl? One should assess oneself on this. One should gauge one's condition according to these standards.

To attain the degree of acceptance in the eyes of Alláh Ta'álá insán is obligated every moment of attaining 'ilm-Iláhí. It is for this reason that Záte-Bárí Ta'álá, in the first instance, endowed insán, in the creation of Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام, with the ta'lím of 'ilm:

وَعَلَّمَ اٰدَمَ الْأَسْمَآءَ كُلَّهَا

And He taught Ádam all the names. (S.2.31.)

Not only were the "names" (asmá') taught, but also their special qualities, their effects, their amounts and their appearances. For example: It was not only taught that this is an apple and this is a grape, but their special qualities, their uses and the reasons for using them, their effects and the reasons for creating them. Their names in Arabic and other languages were also taught.

So, what was taught was not only the "names" but, together with the "names" were taught their special qualities and effects, and so forth – all this was taught in the 'Álame-arwáh and this was absorbed all at once. The process of 'ilm over there is self-evident and not hypothetical. Do you

understand, molvísáhib?

The ’ilm that was taught there by Záte-Bárí Ta’álá was all self-evident and did not require any further explanations and reasoning. There was no need to draw conclusions through the process of reasoning with syllogisms. Do you understand the point? This is the teaching of the asmá’.

The status of ’ilm is of topmost compulsion. Insán is mukallaf for attaining this, not animals and not stones and rocks. When insán is now accountable, it can be deduced that he has been made accountable when he was entrusted with the power of resolve and choice (irádah-ikhtiyáriyyah) as a trust. If this were not so, it amounts to compulsion, which is zulm.

Therefore, to say in connection with any deed: “I am unable to do it,” is zulm on oneself and it is shierk. Discarding the amal is a method of bringing on fasád and bid-amaní for oneself, for it implies that this is what one desires. If, on the other hand, one is desirous of aman, then one should utilise those means, those processes and those methods that have been created for this mukallaf person. Utilise these. There is aman in their utilisation. In discarding them there is bid-amaní. This may apply to the individual or to the community, to the outside society or to the domestic scene.

Acts which have been designated as manhí-anhá (prohibited), warrant to be abstained from. Acts which have been designated as ma’múr-bihá (commanded), need to be acted on. If one were to substitute what is commanded by the opposite prohibited acts, it is apparent that there will be fasád. An item is recognised by its opposite.

An illustration: Summer and winter are two opposites in their respective positions, are they not? If it is winter and instead of utilising the means for heat, the conditions for heat, the methods of heat, and one also uses the precautions against the cold in winter. However, he is lying outside on the chárpáí. He does not even have a sheet to cover himself. There is also a cold wind blowing. So, this fasád that befalls him – has he brought it on himself or has it come from Alláh Ta’álá? He himself has summoned it. This is an illustration presented to you. On an individual basis he has summoned for himself something that causes bid-amaní and which is harmful.

So, to act on ma’múr-bihá is the methodology for aman. And to act on

manhí-anhá – which should actually be discarded – is to bring bid-amaní. He himself is accountable for either aman or bid-amaní.

Alláh Ta'álá is pure of bid-amaní. That is why that Being سُبْحَانَكَ (One who is most pure) is entitled to praise. سُبْحَانَكَ اَللّٰهُمَّ comes first and اَلْحَمْدُ لله comes afterwards. In other words, whatever things that are at the level of perfection (kamál) exist in that Being fully and completely. And those things that are worthy of being discarded, which are contrary to purity, are absent in the Being of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá.

Going back to the statement made by this person: "I am unable to stop myself from eating to my heart's content" boils down to being a criticism of Alláh Ta'álá. He is mukallaf for eating to the extent of filling his stomach and he is mukallaf of not eating to his heart's content. This desire to eat to his heart's content is worthy of discarding – for which he is mukallaf. He may eat to the extent of filling his stomach – for which he is mukallaf. However, not to eat at all is contrary to being mukallaf.

So, if what is worthy of being discarded is not discarded, it will bring fasád. If what is worthy of acting on, is not acted on, that will warrant fasád. Therefore, ma'múr-bihá are worthy of acting on and manhí-anhá are worthy of discarding.

That is why Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has said that whatever manhí-anhá is issued from Záte-Bárí Ta'álá is the effect of ghuyúriyet This attribute of guyúriyet is preponderate in Záte-Bárí Ta'álá. It is on account of this elevated guyúriyet that He created manhí-anhá.

When insán – who is mukallaf – utilises what is contrary to guyúriyet, which is manhí-anhá, then Záte-Bárí Ta'álá develops shame (ghairat) towards that Muslim insán. Alláh Ta'álá is virtually saying: "The manner in which you should be believing in Me you are not believing. This makes Me feel ashamed."

اِنَّ اللهَ غَيُوْرٌ وَ يُحِبُّ الْغَيْرَةَ

Alláh Ta'álá is self-respecting and He loves self-respect.

Also, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has stated: "I am ghuyúr, and Alláh Ta'álá is more ghuyúr than me."

So, the existence of manhí-anhá is an expression of this ghuyúriyet. Not to observe manhí-anhá, O insán who is mukallaf, is contrary to the sense of honour (ghairat). To act dishonourably is to bring on shame. Those deeds performed contrary to the sense of honour will bring disgrace. That is why somebody had encapsulated the ghairat of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá concerning manhí-anhá in this Fársí couplet:

Just see the bounty and grace of Alláh Ta'álá,
That the bondsman has committed a sin and He feels ashamed!

A sin is to act contrary to the orders of Alláh Ta'álá. He is trying to instil a sense of shame. Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "Belonging to Me yet, from your side, this activity, this shameless act? You being a mu'min – one with ímán – a name matching Mine, yet this is what you are doing? I feel ashamed."

This is our manner of speaking. The father addresses his son: "You have acted shamelessly. However, ask me – how ashamed am I not feeling! Son, you belong to me, yet you obey somebody else! How disgraced am I not feeling!"

In a similar vein Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "O bondsman! You belong to Me, yet you have obeyed somebody whom you have equated to me? If this is not shierk in tauhíd then what else is it?" In the manner that he should have believed, he did not believe. And shierk is something shameful. How can Záte-Bárí Ta'álá tolerate something that is shameful? Having been a mo'ahhid he is now a mushrik. Having submitted to tauhíd, now to bring into partnership another – how can you create this shierk?

The whole deed should have been performed with tashíhe-'aqá'id, tashíhe-niyet resulting in tashíhe-a'mál, which is termed a'mál-sáleh-khális (pious and pure deeds). These a'mál-sáleh-khális are accepted and if the deeds are worthy of being accepted then the one performing the deeds is also accepted. Every individual desires to be accepted in the eyes of Alláh Ta'álá. That is why Alláh Ta'álá has shown the method, that the person whose deeds have these features in it, is maqbúl. And this is your aim, to be accepted. Therefore, one has to have the necessary commitment compulsorily to take care and be vigilant continuously till the time of death. Do you understand?

In essence, if there is tauhíde-khális (pure and sincere tauhíd) and

ikhláse-kámil (sincerity which is perfect) then there is no reason for non-acceptance. And, if there is no reason for non-acceptance then there is no reason for the person not to be maqbúl.

Elevating every deed to the level of maqbúliyet

If this awareness is present before every deed, then there will be illate-gá'iyah before every external deed for which a person is mukallaf. Therefore, before every deed ponder: "When I am a mu'min having tashíhe-'aqá'id, then my intention should be correct – I should have tashíhe-niyet. Even if I eat – which is an instinctive drive – then too I should have the awareness of my intention: Why am I eating?" Therefore, even the eating is qabúl in the eyes of Alláh Ta'álá. Therefore, in the eyes of Alláh Ta'álá he is maqbúl.

Why so? The reasons why he should be eating are for the body to gain strength and for the limbs and muscles to become strong, so that he may have strength to perform 'ibádat. However, if he eats for this reason that his features and stature should develop into awe-inspiring ones, that others should be fearful of him, that they dare not tell him anything, that should anyone say anything to him, he will strike him with one blow so that this person sinks into the ground, then is this tashíhe-niyet or fasáde-niyet? This is now fasáde-niyet. Then his eating is not qabúl. Therefore, he is not maqbúl. However, if he has the correct niyet, as mentioned above, then this eating of his is qabúl and he is maqbúl. Do you understand these concepts, or still not yet?

The manner of eating is being taught. Finer points of 'ibádat will come later. In other words, the act of eating is being converted to 'ibádat. This is by the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my murshid, may Alláh Ta'álá fill his qabr with núr.

To continue: As was mentioned just now, if the niyet is: "My body and limbs should develop a special strength, that the blood created in my body should be invigourating, so that I may utilise the resulting strength in helping some weak person; that I will be a means of assistance to him; that I will be a means of support to a person at the time of his weakness in order to alleviate his handicap." His eating is then qabúl. Because of his niyet to serve, his eating is qabúl and the one who ate with this niyet is

also maqbúl.

An illustration: A heavy bundle of wood is by the wayside. There is a person sitting next to it. The person (mentioned above) is passing by. He asks: "Why are you sitting here? Why is this bundle of wood kept here?" The person sitting there replies: "The bundle is very heavy. This much I can do – carry it on my head if it can be placed on my head. However, for me to lift it by myself is difficult." Oho! This is why he had eaten, so that he can have strength in his body and his limbs. This was his purpose. He steps forward and lifts the bundle of wood with both his hands and places it on the head of the weak person.

He has been of assistance. It was with this intention to assist the weak that he had eaten. Therefore, this action of his of lifting the bundle of wood and placing on the other person's head, is qabúl and he is maqbúl.

When these aspects (i.e. acts of eating, etc.) which are natural instincts and not 'ibádat in themselves become maqbúl simply because of the correct intention (tashíhe-niyet), then those actions which are acts of 'ibádat in themselves and which contain tashíhe-niyet, why would they not be qabúl? And when they are qabúl why would the one performing them also not be maqbúl?

Danger of wehm and a sálik's correct attitude

Therefore, continue to scrutinise yourself accordingly and continue to walk along. Saving yourself from falling into wehm, carry on walking ahead. Why are you telling yourself: "I am not maqbúl. I am a reprobate."? If this is not ingratitude (kufráne-ne'mat) then what else is it? To the contrary, one should be grateful (shukre-ne'mat). One should praise Alláh Ta'álá (hamdan-lilláh), with good thoughts (husne-zin) towards Záte-Bárí Ta'álá. You should tell yourself: "I am maqbúl. If I were to be a reprobate then I would be Shaitán. However, I am an insán mu'min Muslim." The meaning of Islám is total obedience. "Then, seeing I am a mu'min, one with tashíhe-'aqá'id, tashíhe-niyet and tashíhe-a'mál, if I am not maqbúl then who can be maqbúl?"

O you sálikín! O you who are entering into Tasawwuf! When you are proceeding with these three components and with husne-zin towards

Záte-Bárí Ta'álá, then why are you addressing yourselves with expressions signifying reprobation and in the manner signifying reprobation? The relationship with Záte-Bárí Ta'álá, one of cheerfulness, will not remain. The openness of one's temperament, the blossoming of one's nature, the openness of one's heart and the cheerfulness of one face will not endure. Your mood will be dampened. It must not happen that, from the side of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá there is restraint when there should be attraction. Do you understand the points made? There should not be a withdrawing when there should be closeness. This is the method of living for the mu'min, the one with ímán.

Qur'ánic proof for all three aspects

The proof for all three aspects discussed – tashíhe-'aqá'id, tashíhe-niyet and tashíhe-a'mál, which are pre-requisites for qabúliyet of deeds and the acceptance of the doer – are to be found in the Kalám of Alláh Ta'álá. He states:

وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْاٰ خِرَةَ وَسَعٰى لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولٰٓئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُم مَّشْكُورًا ۝

And whoso desires the hereafter and strives for it with the necessary effort, being a believer; for (people like) these their efforts find favour (with their Lord).(S.17.19.)

"*Mashkúr*" – to be maqbúl.

"*Arádal-ákhirah*" – he is a tálib (seeker) of the hereafter, the result of correct effort. How do we know that he is tálib of the hereafter? We deduce this from the fact that he adopts the means, the efforts and the instruments for achieving this goal. His intention is the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá. "*Arádal-ákhirah*" is to have tashíhe-niyet. This "*Arádal-ákhirah*" makes one mukallaf of tashíhe-niyet. It is apparent that tashíhe-niyet is an objective in performing any deed.

"*Wasa'á lahá sa'yahá*" – this is tashíhe-a'mál. In other words, he is fully involved in observing those parameters which Záte-Bárí Ta'álá has set down for that deed. He is making a full effort, striving to the utmost and labouring to the maximum in carrying out that deed. This is tashíhe-a'mál. "*Wasa'á lahá sa'yahá*" is the proof for tashíhe-a'mál.

"Wa huwa mu'minun" proves tashíhe-'aqá'id. It necessitates tashíhe-'aqá'id.

Consequently, having tashíhe-'aqá'id and tashíhe-niyet he is striving to perform that deed, and in his tashíhe-a'mál there is evidence of all three, then Záte-Bárí Ta'álá states: "These are the people whose deeds are qabúl:

فَأُولَـٰٓئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُم مَّشْكُورًا ۝

"These are the people whose striving is qabúl by Me!" When that striving is in accordance with tashíhe-'aqá'id, tashíhe-niyet and tashíhe-a'mál, why should it not be qabúl?

Such mu'minín are being given glad tidings. And when glad tidings have been announced, the heart and the temperament are open and the countenance is cheerful. Yes? Is my voice reaching you or not? The heart is open and the countenance is cheerful. The heart of the mu'min should be open and his countenance should be cheerful, so why are they subdued?

To summarise and re-emphasise the reason for your presence here

Proof from the Qur'án Sharíf has been presented to you. This is due to the fadhl of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá, the barkat of my sheikh and the sincere niyet and muhabbat of those present here. Haqq Ta'álá has caused me to utter some thoughts to you. A humble plea has been submitted to you as a service. This is the reason why you honoured people have come here and ventured here.

Seeing that you have taken the initiative of venturing here, it should be with tashíhe-'aqá'id, tashíhe-niyet and tashíhe-a'mál, which go with striving of the highest standard. So, you have become mukallaf of striving to the highest degree. So, why is your striving not focused on ma'múr-bihá internally and externally? And why are you not striving to discard manhí-anhá? It appears that there is some fault with your tashíhe-'aqá'id. Because of this fault, there is a fault in your tashíhe-niyet and, therefore, there is no tashíh in the efforts put into your a'mál. This is clear evidence.

That is why you should be ashamed. Ask yourselves: "Why have I ventured here? Why am I not discarding that which needs to be discarded? Why am

I not striving to perform those acts that I am supposed to carry out? Why am I not feeling ashamed? Why is there no ghairat in me?" When this feeling of shame enters and ghairat enters then, with tashíhe-'aqá'id and tashíhe-niyet, the striving for tashíhe-a'mál will take place.

Therefore, why is there still the manifestation of contrary deeds emanating from the tip of the tongue and from the tip of the pen? Why are the writings in this notebook contrary to your mission? There should be purification of the tip of the tongue and purification of the tip of the pen as well. There should be no impurity, no contamination by sin. The life of a mu'min should be one of purity and not one contaminated by sin

Thus, such a mu'min's life will be uncontaminated. In other words, it will be cleansed, pure and elegant. So, why is there no joyfulness in the heart? Why is the heart not ablaze with lustre? This is what Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم had requested of Alláh Ta'álá:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْئَلُكَ اَنْ تَجْعَلَ الْقُرْاٰنَ الْعَظِيْمَ رَبِيْعَ قَلْبِيْ وَنُوْرَ بَصَرِيْ وَجَلَآءَحُزْنِيْ وَذَهَابَ هَمِّيْ

O Alláh! Make the Qur'áne-Azím the lustre of my heart, the radiance of my eyes, lightening of my grief and the removal of my concerns.

It is apparent that when a person performs good deeds (a'mále-sálihah) and discards impious deeds (a'mále-fasád), according to the inducements and virtues extolled in the Qur'án Sharíf, his heart will flourish, causing lustre in the heart, radiance in the eyes, lightening of grief and the removal of concerns. His actions will be the means of all these goodness that Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم has requested.

It becomes obvious that the revelation of the Qur'áne-Azím for a person with such ímán and for such a mu'min – what is it? It is happiness of heart, radiance of the eyes, lightening of grief and removal of worries. From here one can deduce that to be saved from grief, for the removal of worries, for the heart to be filled with cheer and for the eyes to shine with radiance – what are these dependent on? The answer is: the Kalám of Záte-Bárí Ta'álá. This is tauhíd. When one is completely free of shierke-jalí and, on the whole, of shierke-khafí, one is a mo'ahhid, according to the teachings

of the final Nabí صلى الله عليه وسلم. If one does not acknowledge Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم as the final messenger, then there is no tashíhe-'aqá'id. Then where can there be tashíhe-niyet and then how can there be tashíhe-a'mál?

Is the person then a reprobate or maqbúl?

Summary of the majlis

My honourable hadharát! Having ventured here and having attended the majlis with great enthusiasm, the demands of tashíhe-'aqá'id, tashíhe-niyet and tashíhe-a'mál are that one makes a concerted effort to refrain from manhí-anhá completely and one strives to act on what is ma'múr-bihá. Be vigilant about these. One should refrain from writing questions daily in the notebook with the tip of the pen and one should refrain from asking questions daily with the tip of the tongue.

When Alláh Ta'álá has caused us to venture here, then we have to exert fully to stay in such a manner that we become the objects of being maqbúl in the Royal court of Rabbul-'Álamín. To be maqbúl in the Royal court is dependent on qabúl of one's deeds (a'mál) and qabúle-a'mál is dependent on tashíhe-'aqá'id, tashíhe-niyet and tashíhe-a'mál. Alláh Ta'álá has stated in regard to these:

فَأُولَـٰٓئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُم مَّشْكُورًا ۝

They are the ones whose striving is acceptable (to Alláh).

Du'á

May Alláh Ta'álá bless us with continuous and permanent taufíq to act on these principles with tashíhe-'aqá'id, tashíhe-niyet and tashíhe-a'mál together with utmost striving. Ámín.

وَاٰخِرُدَعْوَانَااَنِ الْحَمْدُلِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

Khudá háfiz.

MALFÚZ

The fear of Alláh Ta'álá is a great instrument of protection

The khauf (fear) of Alláh Ta'álá is such a quality that when this khauf is inculcated in a person, the person stops committing many evils.

Another name for khauf is taqwá. With both khauf and taqwá there is progress in one's ímán. Actually, as long as a person does not have khauf, he cannot attain ímán:

اَلْاِيْمَانَ بَيْنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالرَّجَاءِ

Ímán is suspended between fear and hope

As long as there is khauf in a person, he will be able to save himself from harm because of the lack of purdah in women, whether they appear with exposed arms or exposed thighs. Therefore, close the eyes of your heart. Inshá-Alláh, one will be protected.

BOOKLET NUMBER TWENTY TWO

Rajab 1432 – June 2011

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh, solely with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه and the du'ás of well-wishers, this booklet, For Friends Booklet Number Twenty Two, is ready.

While translating this majlis, my psychiatry examination, way back when I was still at medical school, came to mind. At the year-end, after the written examination, we also had to pass an oral examination. I dreaded this oral examination as I was not clued up on psychiatry with its different schools of thought and approaches. Also, the examination was to be conducted by an external examiner, which meant that there was an unknown, unfamiliar specialist from outside to question us. When my turn came I braced myself

for the worst as I sat in front of the examiner. It so happened that he was also the head of the country's panel overlooking mental hospitals. To my utter surprise – and delight – he asked me none of the questions I had dreaded he would ask. Instead, he wanted to know why there were fewer Muslim (or Indian) patients in mental hospitals compared to other groups. What followed was more a discussion than an examination. (Alhamdulilláh, I managed to pass the examination!)

The reason why this came to mind is that our Dín is such that it has built-in mechanisms to prevent mental illnesses. Of the many forces that come into play one important factor is the role that the sheikh of Tasawwuf plays in removing many phobias and other mental conditions, a fact well-recognised but not emphasised enough.

Mental problems appear to be on the increase in our present era. Anxiety states, panic states and other associated conditions are frequent occurrences. Post-traumatic stress has also become common. Not only are we faced with "natural" tragedies like ill health, deaths of close ones and natural disasters but tragedies arising from motor accidents and crime have also increased in leaps and bounds. All of these cause stress.

Thoughts – wasáwis – play an important role in producing stress. This majlis that is in your hands is a case in point on the role that a sheikh plays in helping us with certain problems of a mental nature. The advice given in this majlis has far-reaching effects beyond just the situations discussed.

It is important to remember that what the sheikh achieves can only be done if the muríd has proper faith and confidence in the sheikh – i'timád and i'tiqád. It follows that the muríd has to obey the advice and instructions given by the sheikh and he has to keep on informing his sheikh on his progress or lack of it.

Many sit in the sheik's majlis and feel that this is sufficient. This has its benefits but real progress is to be obtained by communicating regularly with one's sheikh and making him aware of one's condition.

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us all proper understanding and also the ability to act on the valuable advices contained in this majlis.

Obituary

Reference had been made in some past issues that several of the majális that have been translated from tapes, have been done from majális recorded by brother Yusuf (Knobbs) Bulbulia (brother of marhúm Hashim Bulbulia) during his visits to Jalálábád.

It is with much sadness that readers need to be informed that brother Yusuf passed away on the 19th December 2010 in Johannesburg shortly after arriving from Cape Town. He was 65 years old.

Readers are requested to make du'á for his maghfirat.

Dr. I.M.

بِسْمِ اللَّـهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه *in Jalálábád, India, on Saturday, the 5th Jamádul-Ukhrá 1409, corresponding to the 14th January 1989.]*

HARMS OF WASÁWIS AND THE REMEDY

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحْمَدَهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

If an individual is a muríd and his heart wanders in a certain direction on a ghair-ikhtiyárí (non-volitional) basis, but his mind deliberately follows in that direction – on a volitional, ikhtiyárí basis – the end result is vexation and difficulties (pareshání) . And he achieves nothing. At this time there is a great need for firmness (mazbútí).

If the individual has a weakness (of character) – he has a nervous temperament – then a fire, a blaze (not a major one, perhaps, but a minor one) arises within him. That is, he is now overcome with a burning anxiety. It is now very difficult to suppress it. And it is now necessary to oppose it with a great deal of firmness. He should on no account act in accordance with it. He should suppress it, no matter how much force is required. Never

act accordingly. Absolutely not. He should tackle the task of opposing it. Then, inshá-Alláh Ta'álá, his weak temperament will be reversed.

This is the method for its rectification. Yes, initially, it will be burdensome but this is its cure. This is the teaching for him. Now, in this age, these conditions appear rapidly to affect one. That is why it will be taxing in the beginning.

Yes, that individual who has a strong personality and his limbs and intestines are sturdy, will not be affected by such influences because he has an inner strength. This prevents the condition from developing and, if it has developed, he will repel it.

However, for the individual who has a weak constitution, weak limbs and intestines, he will be quickly affected. The affliction is very powerful. To repel the affliction requires a great deal of effort. But this strain has to be borne with steadfastness. Once this has been done a few times, the individual's temperament will become stabilised, inshá-Alláh Ta'álá, and the strain will cease.

To repeat: At that time a severe anxiety develops in him. Now, to suppress this anxiety is a tremendous strain on one who is weak mentally and weak constitutionally. However, act against it forcefully – not in accordance with its dictates but contrary to its dictates. By doing so, inshá-Alláh Ta'álá, the individual will develop stability and equilibrium.

It is necessary to avoid any situation causing worry and anxiety. Whenever a situation presents causing worry and anxiety, one should quickly move away from it.

[At this point some lady apparently appeared (in full purdah) for some need of hers. Hadhrat's topic digressed at this point.]

The wisdom behind women outnumbering men

If a world-wide census is taken as to the numbers of men and women, will the number of women be more or that of men? I do not know. This is also a special field of study.

Whether the number of women will be more or that of men will be evident from this that Alláh Ta'álá has given men permission to marry four women if they are able to do so with fairness and justice (adl aur insáf). When this

permission has been given to marry four women, where will these (extra) women come from?

So, it is apparent that the number of women will be more. This conclusion is based on applying the first principles of logic. This is a deduction. Otherwise, where will they come from?

Alláh Ta'álá knows best.

If, for argument's sake, there are one hundred men and there are four hundred women, then each man could marry four women. However, a condition has been laid down for this:

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تُقْسِطُوْا فِي الْيَتٰمٰى فَانْكِحُوْا مَا طَابَ لَكُمْ مِّنَ النِّسَآءِ مَثْنٰى وَثُلَاثَ وَرُبَاعَ ۚ فَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوْا فَوَاحِدَةً أَوْ مَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ ۚ ذٰلِكَ أَدْنٰى أَلَّا تَعُوْلُوْا ۗ

And if you fear that you shall not be able to deal justly with the orphans, then marry women who seem good to you, two or three, or four; And if you fear that you cannot do justice (to so many), then one only, or (the captives) that your right hands possess (slave girls). In this way it is more likely that you will not be unjust. (S.4.3.)

If you are unable to deal justly, then only one for one. Not even two. Four is even more far-fetched. Now, to live with fairness and justice – is it an easy task? No. It is very difficult!

Fairness and justice were not compulsory on Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم when it came to his pious wives. Despite this, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم observed strict justice.

The reason for mustahabát (optional 'ibádat)

One can understand that Alláh Ta'álá has kept mustahabát with the fará'idh and wájibát of the Sharí'at. One has an option here. Together with the necessities, some aspects have been kept as mustahabát (meritorious) and mustahsanát (commendable). One has a choice. Why is that? The reason is that entry into Jannat is not dependent on these but they are there to attain elevated ranks.

The statement of Alláh Ta'álá is:

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَاتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوْا ۚ

And for all there will be (assigned) ranks according to what they do. (S.46.19.)

Just as there are those who desire to progress to higher levels in worldly matters, one should also have a desire to progress to higher levels in matters of the ákhirat.

Take worldly ranks: a lowly ranked civil servant is very punctual. He carries out his duties in a good and systematic manner, with fairness and justice. His superior is happy with him and he gets promoted. He keeps on progressing till he becomes head of the regional office and then progresses to become head at the main office.

Another example: an ordinary policeman starts off as a constable, progresses to become an inspector and then goes on to become the superintendent. So, due to outstanding performance, the individual progresses higher and higher in official ranks. This should be our efforts as far as the ákhirat is concerned. If this was not possible, why is it said:

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَاتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوْا ۚ

And for all there will be (assigned) ranks according to what they do. (S.46.19.)

This is the very meaning of the verse that every individual will attain ranks according to his a'mál. Entry into Jannat is dependent on ímán and elevated stages are dependent on taqwá

There is a certain áyet in the Qur'án Sharíf. Is there a hafiz over here? Nobody is speaking.

[A háfiz present recited the relevant áyet.]

Very well. What is the áyet? It is the following:

كَانُوْا قَلِيْلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُوْنَ ۝

They used to sleep only a little of the night. (S.51.17.)

Alláh Ta'álá is saying that among My bondsmen there are also those who sleep very little at night and when dawn approaches they then repent abundantly.

وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ ۝

And before the dawning of each day, they would seek forgiveness; (S.51.18.)

When dawn approaches they repent in abundance. The major part was spent in 'ibádat – they separated their sides from places of comfort. This appears in Surah Alif-Lám-Mim Sajdah. The áyet is:

تَتَجَافٰى جُنُوْبُهُمْ عَنِ الْمَضَاجِعِ يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَّطَمَعًا

Their sides are separated from their beds whilst they call their Rabb out of fear and hope.(S32.16.)

In another párá, possibly in the twenty-sixth, it is stated that the major part of the night is spent in 'ibádat and they sleep very little. Despite this, as the dawn approaches, they make istighfár. See, a principle has been enunciated, because a kitáb of law has principles and hardly any secondary details. Yes, a few such details may be found. We now need to see its application. One principle has been laid down.

The whisperings of Shaitán

إِنَّمَا النَّجْوٰى مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ

Evil whispering is only from Shaitán.

Why?

لِيَحْزُنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا

That he may cause grief to those who believe; (S.58.10.)

In order to create distress and suffering such and such thoughts are instilled in the hearts. I am not saying anything. These are basic principles.

Now, the task of applying them is not for everybody. Whatever occupation a person is involved in, he has the experience. Those who are mashá'ikh is the field of fiqah, they will have experience on fiqhí details. They have expertise and insight in the field of fiqh. As ahqar mentioned previously, that person who is running a medical practice where people with various illnesses consult him and most of them recover, he will have experience and expertise in physical illnesses.

The role of the sheikh

Similar is the case of the sheikh dealing with bátiní illnesses. People with various illnesses come to him and the majority are cured. For example: Before turning to the sheikh for self-rectification – before making rujú' to him – what were his worldly cravings? What was the state of his greed and avarice? How much was he drawn towards making progress materially? What was the level of his innate anger? From the aspect of his actions, to what extent was he involved in worthless activities, in seeking glamour and in sins? What was his lifestyle like at home, his harshness and cruelty? What was the form of his disputing with outsiders? To what extent did he burn in jealousy at seeing the worldly progress of others? Etc., etc.

Now, since the seeker has stood up with correct sincerity, those qualities that were in him have been removed and an indifference to materialism is entering his heart. And this is the objective.

The reality of zuhd (abstinence)

The objective is that there should be disaffection from materialism – that is zuhd. Even if he is a king in his external state, his heart is in a state of zuhd as far as materialism is concerned. There should be a continuous process of disaffection. This is the objective.

It is not that no worldly item is possessed or saved. This is no kamál – there is no great achievement in that. The kamál is that he has these items but they have no place in his heart. This is the meaning of zuhd. The real (or original) sunnat of zuhd is this.

The objective is to be tárikud-dunyá and not matrúkud-dunyá

We thus have two conditions: One is "tárikud-dunyá" and the other is "matrúkud-dunyá".

Basically, one has to be a "tárikud-dunyá" and not a "matrúkud-dunyá".

A "tárikud-dunyá": A person whose heart has distanced itself from items that are labelled as "worldly", but which, in actual fact, are not "worldly".

A "matrúkud-dunyá": A person who has nothing. When he does not possess anything then from what does he distance himself from? He has

nothing to distance himself from.

A “tárikud-dunyá”, on the other hand has easy access to material items but he attaches no value to these in his heart. The normal means that exist to attain an item he utilises, because the order is to utilise these means, but his gaze and his heartfelt faith and confidence are on Alláh Ta’álá. And this is the Sunnah method.

As was read in yesterday’s sermon of Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه that if – Alláh forbid – some material loss occurs, he does not sit down with grief; he does not involve himself in its preoccupation; he does not let his mind delve into this and that; he does not allow his temperament to brood over it and descend into grief. In fact, he is unconcerned. He has suffered a financial loss but he has not sat down aggrieved. It is not so that he had certain hopes and now he is overcome with hopelessness.

Perfection in ’abdiyet (bondsmanship)

From this it comes out that he does not boast about this. In the same way he does not boast about his staying awake at night in ’ibádat. However, he remembers and pictures to himself his shortcomings.

From here we can deduce that one should make istighfár after ’ibádat even. Then – may Alláh Ta’álá save! May Alláh Ta’álá save us! – after having committed evil, why should one not make taubah? Having committed a sin why should one not be repentant and make taubah?

Therefore, he makes istighfár.

Alláh Ta’álá says: “Just see how good are My bondsmen – to what degree of ’abdiyet are they not exhibiting – that they involve themselves in so much ’ibádat and then they still make istighfár. How great is this ’abdiyet not! This is ’abdiyete-kámilah – perfection in exhibiting bondsmanship. Their gaze is not on their own efforts. They show gratitude for the taufíq to perform deeds. Their gaze is on their shortcomings. They then make istighfár. There is no arrogance by them gazing on their ’ibádat and piety. However, they display humility. How good bondsmen are they not!”

One person wrote to Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه in connection with his ’ibádat: “I cannot achieve perfection in ’abdiyet.” Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه wrote back: “The day that you consider that you have achieved perfection in your

’abdiyet, that is the day of your ‘mátim’!”

Do you know what mátim is? This is the crying and lamenting that commences when somebody passes away.

So, the day that one considers one’s ’ibádat to have reached perfection, that is the day of “mátim”. What an amazing statement he made! In other words, that is the day for crying tears. A very true statement.

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه did not write: “What is the elevated degree of Alláh Ta’álá’s grandeur and majesty, and what is the level of your ’ibádat that you have considered your ’ibádat commensurate with His status?” He merely wrote back: “That is the day of ‘mátim’”.

From here it can be understood that one should be busy with work. That is all. Shift your gaze away from considering it to be perfection. Otherwise Shaitán will appear. Shaitán will present himself in order to make you weep – for no reason at all, merely out of mischief – in order to remove any cheerfulness, to make the soul dispirited. Shaitán will come to demoralise you.

The sálik should display joy and enthusiasm

Yesterday Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه mentioned in his lecture that the sálik should display happiness. Upon this, ahqar repeatedly placed tremendous stress on it that when the sálik executes the orders (of the Sharí’at), taking special care to do so to the best of his abilities, harbouring in his heart its honourable status, it is necessary for him to be joyful. There should be no laziness. In other words, his temperament should be open all the time. This is necessary. Anything that brings about a decrease in his enthusiasm should be avoided and removed as quickly as possible. Otherwise Shaitán will appear.

This is the reason why wasáwis (thoughts instilled by Shaitán) trouble such persons (sálikín) to a greater extent. This is the problem. Ordinary people are not troubled as much.

The concerns of the general populace revolve around counting: two and two rupees equal to four, and three and three rupees equal to six. Where are goods obtainable cheaply and where are they expensive? Buy from the cheaper source and sell at the expensive outlet. So, the question about the

state of their minds does not arise. Their minds are set there.

Wasáwis come to the person who has placed importance on the Dín, to those who are pursuing Dín with dedication. The robber of ímán comes to such persons.

The remedy for wasáwis

That is why Alláh Ta'álá has shown the remedy for these thoughts, that one should ignore them completely; one should be completely unconcerned, completely thoughtless and not incline at all, to the extent that such thoughts become non-existent. As far as possible live like that.

إِنَّمَا النَّجْوٰى مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ لِيَحْزُنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا

Evil whispering is only from Shaitán that he may cause grief to those who believe. (S.58.10.)

Such thoughts keep on coming from Shaitán to bring grief to the mu'min. So, O Muslims! Do not give a thought to such thoughts. Keep in mind Haqq Ta'álá's remedy. From where does the sheikh write from? He writes from there, because the gaze of the sheikh is on Him. The mudarris does not have this vision.

A very beautiful sentence was uttered yesterday: "For something to occur in conformity with your hopes, this is in conformity with your temperament. For it not to occur in conformity with your hopes, this will be in conformity with Bárí Ta'álá's temperament."

What an excellent sentence! When you give preference to the wishes of Alláh Ta'álá it is in conformity with your affairs, as this is in accordance with the wishes of Záte-Haqq. From your side you should be in conformity with Záte-Haqq.

When this concept has become grounded then, upon the loss of wealth and so forth – which are part and parcel of insán's necessities – where will there be despondency and grief? Yes, such thoughts may come but they will not be entertained. Will he wilfully bring them on? No. Will he expand them? No. However, he will crush them. This is haqqe-abdiyet bi-haqqe-ma'búdiyet (the rights of bondsmanship in relation to the rights of the Master).

Sabr is also ’ibádat

This is exhibiting sabr, because sabr is also an act of esoteric worship – it is an act of ’ibádat of the bátin. Alláh Ta’álá desired that such an event should occur causing him grief, as is demanded by him being human, and he made use of sabr. To make sabr is to be in conformity with Alláh Ta’álá and not to make sabr is to be discordant.

So, sabr is ’ibádat. That is why to deliberately ponder and bring to mind grief and to expand it, is contrary to sabr. Where can this be in conformity with Alláh Ta’álá’s wishes? So, to be desirous of being in conformity with one’s own desires and to remain thus is contrary to ’abdiyet. So, to be regular with pious deeds (a’mále-sálihah) and to maintain a state of hopefulness, is the condition of best of deeds (khairul-amal):

وَالْبٰقِيٰتُ الصّٰلِحٰتُ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ ثَوَابًا وَّخَيْرٌ مَّرَدًّا ۝

And the good deeds which are lasting are better in your Rabb’s sight for reward, and better for the end result. (S.19.76.)

This “báqi-yátus sálihát” is khair (goodness) in the eyes of your Rabb. Also, to be hopeful is khair. With khairul-amal (good/ pious deeds) and khairul-’umíd (good/ optimistic hopes) one should have positive expectations. It cannot happen to the contrary. This is a promise. However, that there should only be goodness and no harms at all from the worldly point of view, this is not promised. The reason is that, if no difficulties presented themselves, how could the ’ibádat of sabr and other qualities be practised? This has also been kept in place.

The cause of grief: ghair-ikhtiyárí wasáwis & dreams

So, ghair-ikhtiyárí thoughts and ghair-ikhtiyárí wasáwis cause grief. This is what is being discussed. However, to deliberately set one’s mind in pursuit of these thoughts is contrary to ’abdiyet, contrary to being an ’abd and contrary to ’ibádat.

One should intentionally direct one’s mind towards the ridhá’ (pleasure) of Záte-Bárí-Ta’álá. But you have directed your mind opposite to ridhá’. You have flung it into worry.

It cannot happen that ghair-ikhtiyárí wasáwis do not arise at all. They are attached and closely linked to you. More or less everybody will have them. However, the dignified and gracious attitude of ’abdiyet is that no attention is paid to them. Deliberately directing one’s attention – what is termed “qasdí-fikrí-soch” – is not done.

When seeing fearful dreams

Included in the category of thoughts and wasáwis coming on a ghair-ikhtiyárí basis, are the seeing of dreams. Dreams come on a ghair-ikhtiyárí basis and cannot cause harm in any way. They are no cause for anxiety. Alláh Ta’álá is consoling us, teaching us and giving us the remedy that there is no harm in them, neither worldly nor as far as the ákhirat is concerned.

Worldly harm may be in connection with ján (life/ health), mál (wealth) or ábrú (honour). So, can dreams cause any harm to one’s health, one’s wealth or one’s honour? Therefore, why be grieved (by dreams) when your eyes open? So, be without concern. Rather, lightly spit thrice to the side in the direction of the side of the body that your eyes opened on and recite “Lá-howla...” thrice, turn on the other side and do the same thrice. This is the antidote for Shaitání dreams. Now remain unconcerned. Why are you grieving? Has the dream caused any physical harm, any material loss or any dishonour?

There is also no harm as far as the ákhirat is concerned. The reason is that your actions and efforts played no part in bringing on these wasáwis and ghair-ikhtiyárí dreams. So, there can be no harmful consequences in the ákhirat. The reason is that there is no sin committed: harm in the ákhirat comes from sinning. Whereas, this is not committing a sin – there is no part played by one’s volitional deeds (ikhtiyárí amal). So, why is there grief?

Therefore, Alláh Ta’álá has shown that Shaitán will try to cause mu’mins to grieve by instilling a diversity of thoughts. Alláh Ta’álá is saying: “O Muslims! Do not direct your thoughts thither. There will be no accounting, no questioning from My side. To the contrary, I am happier even to a greater extent that what a good mu’min he is that, despite such thoughts and wasáwis coming from Shaitán, he is unconcerned. Neither is there

any weakness from the aspect of his ’aqá’id nor is there any indolence in his deeds. What a solid mu’min is he that he is performing his ma’múlát (schedule of daily ’ibádat) punctually and he is firmly grounded in his ’aqá’ide-ímániyah. What an excellent mu’min is he, that this shows the elevated stage of the perfection of his ímán!”

The condition of some sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم

This was the preamble of the Hadíth Sharíf: When some sahábah رضی الله تعالی عنهم related to Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم the state of being bombarded by wasáwis, that such-and such wasáwis came to them, that it would be better that they were burnt into charcoal... You must have studied the Hadíth Sharíf.

So, how severe must the wasáwis have been that they were so alarmed as to consider it to better that they become burnt to charcoal. So, Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم reassured them: “This is open evidence of your ímán. You are grieved; I am happy! So, you be happy with my happiness, because Shaitán’s happiness lies in seeing you dejected; whereas my happiness lies in seeing you cheerful and happy. So, do you prefer to be happy with my happiness or do you prefer to be happy with Shaitán’s happiness?”

What reply will a mu’min give? He will say: “I am happy with your happiness.” So, it is as if Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم is saying: “If you are happy with my happiness then I am asking: will there be grief after that? Not at all!” So much so, thereafter they had no complaints of any kind. Thoughts must have come to them subsequently, small or big, of one kind or another, but nobody had any complaints thereafter.

Importance of i’timád and i’tiqád

This is i’timád (trust and confidence) and this is i’tiqád (faith) in one’s patron. Based on this i’timád and i’tiqád, they were cured for the rest of their lives. They became extremely happy and grief departed.

It was not a case where anxieties, wasáwis and dreams are related on a daily basis and then turning in misery to these thoughts. What i’timád and i’tiqád has he that he sits nursing such thoughts?

Qissah: the maqám of tawakkul

That is why Hadhrat Shiblí رحمة الله عليه asked one durwesh: “Which particular stage (maqám) are you striving for nowadays?” This incident was related to us by Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه . The durwesh replied: “The maqám of tawakkul (reliance on Alláh Ta’álá).” Hadhrat Shiblí رحمة الله عليه then said: “Oho! Up to now you are still concerned about food and drink?”

In actual fact, tawakkul is a very elevated maqám. However, there is another stage much higher than that.

So, despite being shown the remedy, he is still occupied with altercations concerning thoughts, wasáwis and dreams. He continuously complains about these. If one speaks, now to whom must one speak? Out of shame he does not mention that he had written to his sheikh and his sheikh had replied in this manner and had shown this remedy. How must he write now? Nevertheless, he is still grieving.

So, it is apparent that he has no i’timád on his sheikh. He follows his own thoughts and opinions. He is his own devotee.

The importance of the sheikh’s teachings

Were the statements of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم merely to console or were they the final say and permanent remedy?

In a similar manner, does the sheikh merely try to console the heart by utilising this methodology? If this is his belief (that the sheikh spoke merely to console him) then this difficulty is the result of it.

When the sálik is directed towards performing pious deeds and abstaining from evil, with the emphasis on the importance of observing the záhirí and bátiní laws, it is done with the object of safeguarding his heart from matters that are ghair-ikhtiyárí all the time. He should himself stay away from such actions that cause anxiety. If external events cause anxiety then he should keep his temperament clear of these. He should not incline towards them.

If, incidentally, these thoughts are forceful, they should be repelled. Do not worry about the energy needed but utilise a greater force to put an end to the force. Use a greater force to repel what is causing tumult and anxiety.

However, one who has weakness in his temperament, weakness of his

limbs, weakness of his insides and body and weakness of his mind, he should not repel that which is causing tumult and anxiety with force – he should merely ignore it. The reason is that any attempt to repel thoughts is also inclining towards them.

Perhaps you have not understood the point, so, listen again: To attempt to repel is also to incline towards. And the advice given above is to remain aloof. Therefore, no attention is paid at all.

If you do incline you will have regrets. You are being swerved away from regrets. The instruction is being given: Be involved in work, in duties. "Zálika saríul ímán" – this is clear evidence of ímán. Be involved in work, in duties.

Such thoughts from Shaitán assail sáliks in abundance. At times these are very forceful. There are many such incidents.

A qissah concerning an 'álim acting on his dream

An excellent 'álim and a good orator was bai'at to Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه. After the demise of Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه he came here. He had previously been in correspondence with me. He stayed at the Muniwálí Masjid, where the Kashmírí students now stay. There were no students there in those days. Those who stayed here resided in the madrasah.

He was a zákir-shághil person . He was also an orator and a good one. One day, after the Fajr namáz he came to see me. I was living upstairs. He knocked on the door. When I opened the upstairs door I saw that it was this molvísáhib.

I enquired: "What is the problem?" He replied: "I saw a dream last night. It has frightened me. So, I have come to take permission to go home." I said: "Molvísáhib, what are you saying? Such an insignificant event and such a major effect! Just because of a dream!" He said: "The dream was of such a nature." I said: "Oho! What was this dream that affected you to such a great degree?" He explained: "The dream is this that I saw my neighbour, who is a very evil person, had abducted my wife." I said: "Molvísáhib, how can you say such a thing?" He said: "No really! My wife is very beautiful and she has big, beautiful eyes. Very beautiful, with beautiful big eyes! And my neighbour is a very wicked man." I said: "Very well. Khudá hafiz."

It is also always my habit that, after mentioning something once or twice and the person does not accept, then it is: "Very well. Khudá hafiz".

The molvísáhib departed. He was a very sincere and fair-minded 'álim. After all, he was involved in zikr and shaghl. From his home he wrote a very remorseful letter: "When I reached home I found my wife very happy and cheerful. There was absolutely no cause for any alarm. I feel very regretful that I paid no heed to your explanation and admonition. I seek your forgiveness. I made a mistake."

So you can see how Shaitán intervened. By not having i'timád and i'tiqád on one's senior Shaitán's heart was made happy and Rahmán's displeasure was incurred.

Sálikín have been told only this one incident. Sálikín experience such incidents in abundance: The student suddenly remembers his home; he sees a dream; his thoughts wander to his family; he thinks of his mother or his sister. Now anxiety sets in – his tabiyet is be-chen. To combat this condition is extremely difficult. Result: he wants to take leave and go home. He makes up various stories. Trying to explain to him he still does not want to understand.

So, whoever is involved in Díní work and at whatever level he is involved in ta'lím and tarbiyet, Shaitán will assail him.

Shaitán's ploy is to divert from a greater task to a lesser one

Shaitán will divert a person from a greater Díní task to a lesser task, the task still being Díní. The reason is that the person will not pay any attention to worldly tasks for he has become very firm. Therefore, Shaitán will direct him to a Díní task.

Are you listening?

He is directed to a lesser Díní task. He will reason that this is also Díní work. So, he discards the greater Díní task and gets involved in the lesser one. Now, at such a time to differentiate whether this is a lesser or greater Díní task is very difficult. Yes, if he has spent a considerable time with a muhaqqiq and he has listened with great attention, having proper i'timád and i'tiqád in him, he may be able to differentiate somewhat. Otherwise it is very difficult.

A qissah about a buzurg's repeated urge to go for jihád

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه explained:

Jihád was in progress. This person had the urge, time and again, to go and participate in jihád. He became gravely concerned: Why this repeated insistence on going in jihád?

A sincere concern (fikre-sahíh) will guide a tálibe-sádiq (a sincere seeker/ one travelling along the path of Tasawwuf). Do you understand? To repeat: From the side of Alláh Ta'álá guidance comes to one who is a tálibe-sádiq and who has a sincere concern.

So, when this tálibe-sádiq utilised this sincere concern and pondered over it, he caught up! He addressed his nafs, from where the urge was emanating: "I have caught up! I am fighting you daily – jihád against you is for twenty-fours daily. You have become frustrated at this, so you are encouraging me towards that jihád which is not in the category of nafíre-ám . What I am involved in is also jihád. Your vain desires, your lusts, your desires for super-luxuries, your unlawful relationships are relinquished and up-rooted. So, continuously I am waging jihád against you. The sword of 'Lá' , sharpened on both sides, is being slashed on you twenty-four hours daily. Wanting to escape this, you are suggesting I participate in that jihád. You wretched fellow! I will not go! You are stopping me from a greater 'ibádat and you want to take me towards a lesser 'ibádat."

This was related by Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه.

Differentiating between good and evil

To continue: Shaitán approaches the tálibe-ilm and the tálibe-tarbiyet frequently. He diverts from a greater 'ibádat to a lesser 'ibádat. To be able to differentiate in this melee, in this mix-up, is not the work of everybody. Take the opinion of one on whom you have i'timád and i'tiqád. It can happen that, occasionally, his opinion may be wrong. Some people may show one feature externally and may show another internally. Some may exhibit extreme evil externally but their internal condition may be extremely good.

Dreams and their interpretation can be very tricky

Similarly, sometimes a dream may indicate something very good but its internal meaning may indicate evil. Now, how can one pay any attention to dreams?

One person sees a dream in which his clothes are soiled with his faeces. The dream appears to be a foreboding of great evil but, in its interpretation, in its bátin, it brings good news. Seeing himself covered in impurity it seems that he is in anticipation of some wealth. It is possible that he will receive some wealth from some place:

"Ad-dunyá jífah" – In its substance dunyá is filthy, impure, covered with impurities. It is possible that he will attain greater wealth. So, what did the záhir indicate and what did the bátin indicate?

Let me mention another dream. Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه related this. Its interpretation has also been published.

In the time of Hadhrat Sháh Abdul-Azíz رحمة الله عليه a person came to him and commenced to relate to him the dream he had: "I saw Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم in my dream last night. He came to visit me at my humble home. He was dressed in royal clothing..." Hadhrat Sháh Abdul-Azíz رحمة الله عليه exclaimed: "Go quickly! Go home and quickly empty your house. It is about to collapse!"

Just see: Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is paying a visit and the interpretation is that of ruination and destruction. The house was about to collapse. He was told to go quickly. He had i'timád and i'tiqád. He left. He quickly started evacuating the house, taking out his wife, children, goods and so forth. When he had done so the roof fell in and the house collapsed!

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه narrated that somebody enquired from Hadhrat Sháh Abdul-Azíz رحمة الله عليه: "Hadhrat, how did you manage to interpret that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم coming to visit and you said what you said?" Sháh Sáhib replied: "Yes. My mind immediately focused on that áyet of the Qur'án Sharíf:

إِنَّ الْمُلُوْكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوْا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوْهَا وَجَعَلُوْٓا أَعِزَّةَ أَهْلِهَا أَذِلَّةً ۚ

When kings enter a town, they ruin it and humiliate its honourable people.
(S.27.34.)

"When kings conquer a territory, after entering the city, they commence to destroy the place. They do this to show their force, their might, their power, their firmness, in order to establish a following. They start destroying. He had said that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم appeared in royal clothing. So, I gave this interpretation that appears in the Qur'án Sharíf, that this is the habit of kings after conquering."

So you see: The dream was a good dream but the interpretation foretold something else.

Another dream: Another person had a dream that he was copulating with his mother. He even needed to make ghusl when he woke up. On the surface this dream is horrendous, that he is copulating with his own mother! However, the interpretation is good: He will develop 'abdiyet and fanáyet in him.

"Mother" in this instance refers to the ground, the earth. Without any concern for people, he is tossing himself in the earth. As one should toss around in the earth, he is doing just that, without any concern of what people would say. This insane person is rolling in the sand. He is squashing himself into the earth.

So: "mother" refers to the earth and "copulating" refers to squashing himself.

Do you see the outward horror of the dream? This person must have become terrified. He must have questioned himself as to whether he still had ímán or not the way he had conducted himself with his mother.

The mind and heart are being invited to sukún

The above dreams have been related for clarification. The opinions and statements of the buzurgs: what were their deeds and actions? What does the Qur'án Sharíf state? In which direction is the Kalám of Alláh Ta'álá directing our attention? It is to clear the minds of those who are occupied with the work of Dín with due concentration and importance. It is to remove mental turmoil. It is to put an end to the disarray of thoughts afflicting them.

The mind and heart are being invited to sukún (peace and tranquillity). With muhabbat Záte-Bárí-Ta'álá is giving ta'lím to His own on how to keep

oneself with basháshat (cheer and happiness).

That person who is proceeding diligently, with sincerity, in accordance with the instructions and orders of Haqq Ta'álá, has he become Alláh Ta'álá's or not?

When someone belongs to you, would you wish to keep your own kin cheerful or sad, worried or free of worries, grieved or happy? Would you wish to keep the person and see the person cheerful or depressed and burdened?

If this is your situation that you wish to see your own kin happy, cheerful, free of worries, then Záte-Bárí-Ta'álá is giving ta'lím to His own. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is giving instructions that he wishes to keep such a person happy and to see such a person cheerful. The name given to such persons is "sálikín".

Therefore, these sálikín should keep their minds and their hearts instilled with freshness, with cheer, with peace and tranquillity. Any such undertakings which causes a diminishing of this cheer or causes undue worry, the processes leading to them should be avoided. The processes should be shunned. Should these present themselves on a ghair-ikhtiyárí basis, one should pay no attention to them. This is its methodology.

Even if the ghair-ikhtiyárí event presents itself and creates anxiety and worry in you then too do not incline towards this. Pay no attention to it even if you have to force yourself. Combat that force with your own force.

What are your thoughts on this?

When you pit your force against that force then that force will diminish. Otherwise that molehill will become a mountain. However, if you combat that force with your own force, the mountain will be reduced to a molehill.

"Zálika saríhul ímán" – that is clear proof of your ímán.

What a mountain that was that was burnt down and became what? Turned into ashes! What a mighty mountain that was that was reduced to a molehill!

You now have a choice: You can make the mountain into a molehill or you can make the molehill into a mountain. Your murabbí haqíqí (spiritual

guide) is advising you on the former – your wish is your own choice. What I am saying is that:

إِنَّمَا النَّجْوٰى مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ لِيَحْزُنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا

Evil whispering is only from Shaitán that he may cause grief to those who believe. (S.58.10.)

It is up to you. You may nurture grief; lie immersed in grief. I am saying – your murabbí-haqíqí is saying: "Not at all!" This is what I am saying. This is a remedy for one's whole life, is it not?

Whether staying here or whether it is when you reach home; in seclusion or amongst people; staying with your sheikh or staying at a distance from him; in domestic ghair-ikhtiyárí affairs as well as Díní ghair-ikhtiyárí affairs – in all situations this is a remedy.

Before marriage the mother saw the potential wife: her complexion was fair and pink and she thought her to be a likeable match for his son. Now, how did she know whether she had an abusive tongue or not or whether she had a bad character? Yes, she is chaste and pure. However, a tongue that is abusive, a raging temperament and stubbornness of habits? How did the mother know she would be like that?

This is just an illustration put in front of you.

They got married. Initially, she is waited upon and has no duties. After a while she has to manage various tasks – she has to perform household duties and she also has to interact with others. She is now seen to be very abusive. May Alláh protect all! It turns out that she is extremely obstinate.

For him is this ghair-ikhtiyárí or ikhtiyárí? It is ghair-ikhtiyárí. Little did he command her to be abusive or stubborn. This is ghair-ikhtiyárí.

The position of the tafsír of Abdullah Ibn Abbás رضی اللہ تعالی عنہما

Hadhrat Abdullah Ibn Abbás رضی اللہ تعالی عنہما holds an important and pre-eminent position in the field of tafsír of the Qur'án Sharíf, so much so that his tafsír is given preference over that of others. In relation to the tafsír of the following:

وَلِلرِّجَالِ عَلَيْهِنَّ دَرَجَةٌ ؕ

And men are a degree above them (women). (S.2.228.)

He states that the statement of Alláh Ta'álá that men have a status above that of women, entails a very superior status, a very elevated status. He states further that if this is the case then men, meaning husbands, should have forbearance when anything occurs against their temperaments. They should have tolerance and exercise sabr when confronted by issues contrary to their temperaments. They should have forbearance so that they can exercise tolerance and sabr.

That person who is a true sheikh, one who is experienced, keeps all these in mind.

One person, a student in taríqat, wrote to Hadhratwálá ,رحمة الله عليه: "My wife is so abusive that she keeps on saying horrible things. What should I do?" Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه wrote back: "From your side you should deal with her with justice (adl); and on her injustice (be-adlí) you should make sabr."

Is the subject closed or not closed?

If you also react as she has behaved what question is there of you having a higher status? She has behaved like a woman and you have also behaved like a woman. When your status is higher then there should be only adl (justice) from your side and, on her be-adlí (injustice) you should make sabr.

This offensive behaviour from the wife, is this not ghair-ikhtiyárí? The discussion today has centred around "ghair-ikhtiyárí".

Now, if somebody were to ask: "For how long must I adopt this attitude?" The answer is: "Lifelong. Till the last breath!"

This talk is directed to the tálibe-sádiq

These remarks are directed at the tálibe-sádiq – that person who is sincere in cleansing his character (tazkiyah), who is sincere in his self-rectification (isláh). The dunyádár – the worldly person – is not being addressed. This talk is directed at the tálibe-sádiq, one seeking his self-rectification, one who is sincere in his quest for his isláh.

To continue: Examples of ghair-ikhtiyárí situations arise in the home to a much greater extent than outside. These may proceed form the children and from the mother and father, and a great deal from the wife. They arise very little outside but much more within the household. These are

all ghair-ikhtiyárí. So, in matters that are ghair-ikhtiyárí work should be taken from sabr and forbearance. No step must be taken that is contrary to the Sharí'at – either verbally or physically. My talk is directed to the tálibe-sádiq.

A qissah of how harmony came to a home

Let me relate something: A young man, a husband, wrote to me: "My wife is very abusive. At times she uses extremely harsh language. Mostly I just listen. Sometimes I also tell her off." Men from cultured families are like that.

"One day she was telling me off. I stood and listened silently. I then went outside. After a while I retuned. She was busy doing her work. I went close to her, placed my hand on her head, lightly tapped her on her waist and, smilingly, with warmth and love, said, 'Darling wife! Subhánalláh! What you told me just now was so eloquent! It sounded so beautiful! I have come to listen to it again. I was absolutely thrilled! What were you saying? Just repeat everything.' She started laughing. Hadhrat, that happened a long time ago. We have not had a serious argument since! Both our lives are now full of joy and pleasure!"

One has to change oneself. In order to change a situation one has to first change oneself.

Matters ghair-ikhtiyárí present themselves countless times from morning to night. This ta'lím is for everybody. However, it is specifically for the tálibe-ilm who is involved in studying the Dín with sincerity. It is for the tálibe-tarbiyet who is sincere in his quest. It is specifically for them. It is necessary for them to be cheerful all the time. There is a need for inshirah . It is necessary for the temperament to be happy and cheerful at all times so that he may proceed towards Alláh Ta'álá bowing, drawn towards Him. His ma'múlát should be completed with cheerfulness.

This is why Alláh Ta'álá is making such bondsmen of His as persons without worry. He is washing away their grief. He is extending an invitation for them to live with cheer. He is calling them towards a life of joy. He is instructing them to live blissfully. Remember that:

إِنَّمَا النَّجْوٰى مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ لِيَحْزُنَ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا

Evil whispering is only from Shaitán that he may cause grief to those who believe. (S.58.10.)

Therefore, do not ever concern yourself about it – never ever. Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "My happiness is in this. So, if My happiness is in it, your happiness should also be in it. It is wrong to be dejected." The grief has turned into cheer and happiness. This is the invitation that Alláh Ta'álá is extending. And who does not accept the invitation of One who is great? Záte-Bárí-Ta'álá is extending an invitation to His own. And every mu'min belongs to Alláh Ta'álá. The status of every mu'min is different.

The statement made is: "Yahzunal-lazína ámanú". The word is "ámanú" and not "attaqú". That is, the statement applies to those who believe and is not restricted to those who have taqwá. For those among the believers who have taqwá – a special degree of taqwá – they are in need even more so. This was the theme and this áyet came to mind.

The noble and dignified status of a kámil mu'min

Just see how good some bondsmen of Alláh Ta'álá are: they sleep very little at night. Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "There are such bondsmen of Mine who sleep only a small portion of the night." This is an áyet which did not come to mind fully up to now.

كَانُوْا قَلِيْلًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ مَا يَهْجَعُوْنَ ۝

They used to sleep only a little of the night. (S.51.17.)

"What (splendid) bondsmen are there of mine that they sleep very little at night and when dawn approaches:

وَبِالْأَسْحَارِ هُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوْنَ ۝

And before the dawning of each day, they would seek forgiveness; (S.51.18.)

"They stay awake in such a way (in 'ibádat) and, when dawn approaches, they display their 'abdiyet. They do not boast that they stayed awake so long during the night, that they were busy with such and such 'ibádat, that they have attained an elevated status of 'ibádat and level of qabúliyet.

They do not do this but they preserve My majestic status of One worthy of worship and they display their status of 'abdiyet. The greater portion of the night is spent in 'ibádat and they repent as dawn approaches. They display 'abdiyet and do not boast."

We can deduce that irrespective of how much 'ibádat is performed, with sincerity and truthfulness (ikhlás and sidq), there should be no conceit. One should only display humility and humbleness.

The basis of entering Jannat at the first instance

Now, what has been mentioned above concerning those who are mu'min muttaqí, who stay awake in 'ibádat at night and repent as dawn approaches, that they will enter Jannat – their permanent stay (dukhúle-khulúd) in Jannat is not dependent on this action.

In order to be eligible to enter Jannat permanently at the first instance (awwale-wehle) is dependent on ímán and to continuously carry out wájib injunctions of the Sharí'at. To enter permanently into Jannat at the first instance – at the moment of death – entails carrying out continuously the essentials of the Sharí'at (mámúriyet) and abstaining from what is forbidden (minhiyát). This is the means for permanent entry into Jannat immediately on dying.

When a person passes away merely with ímán (nafse-ímán) he will also enter Jannat permanently but there is no promise that this will be immediately on dying.

At the moment the discussion relates to permanent residence in Jannat (dukhúle-khulúd) at the first instance (awwale-wehle). What has been mentioned above about the muttaqí mu'min, that he continuously carries out what has been ordered (ma'múr-bihá) and he continuously abstains from what is forbidden (manhí-anhá), for him is entry into Jannat at the first instance.

Further on where Haqq Ta'álá has mentioned that from among these there are also such who stay awake in 'ibádat during the greater part of the night, sleeping during the lesser portion, and then they direct their attention towards repentance, turning to Alláh Ta'álá in penitence, this is not the basis for permanent residence in Jannat – it is stated as an increase of status

and attaining elevated stages. This is what was stated earlier on. To repeat: This is a basis for attaining elevated stages. And who is not desirous of higher stages in worldly matters? So, even to a greater degree, why should one not be desirous of this (i.e. of higher stages in the hereafter)?

Alláh Ta'álá is congratulating such persons. He is patting them on the back. Such bondsmen also exist. He has drawn our attention that they have focused their attention on the Dín, so you also focus your attention this way. This is a form of encouragement – it is an encouragement to those who are His to progress in stages in the hereafter.

As for those who are sálikín and tálibín, when they have entered into Sulúk, what is their motivation? It is:

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجَاتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوْا ۚ

And for all there will be (assigned) ranks according to what they do.
(S.46.19.)

This should be their purport: To strive continuously, focusing on the awareness and necessities of the Sharí'at, and on the mustahabát, to the extent of one's health and ease, and to discard laziness.

A letter and its reply: the status of Tahajjud

Just today I have replied to a letter from a person staying overseas, in Jiddah. He had written: "I perform the (nafl saláts of) Ishráq, Chást, Awwábín and Tahajjud. However, at times, I deliberately do not perform them so that I do not elevate them to the position of being fard. I deliberately do not perform them."

I wrote to him: "Our 'aqídah is that they are nafl. However, in practise they are at the level of fard from the aspect of deeds. Definitely, our 'aqídah is that they are nafl. However, permanence in performing deeds (dawáme-amal) the attitude is as one has towards what is fard. So, how can you deliberately not perform them?"

Has Shaitán got hold of him or not yet, that at times he deliberately does not perform them? So, this is the remedy. As far as 'aqídah is concerned, they are not fard – our 'aqídah is that they are nafl. That is why the Ahlulláh have the 'aqídah that Tahajjud namáz is nafl but they perform it

(so regularly) as if it is fard.

In summary & Du'á

So, the practical life of the sálik is to attain elevated stages. This is to be found in the pursuit of progress in performing deeds.

May Alláh Ta'álá bless us to observe the rights that Sulúk has on us – good Sulúk, pious Sulúk, pious behaviour – with ikhlás and sidq.

فِيْ اَمَانِ اللهِ

Khudá hafiz.

BOOKLET NUMBER TWENTY THREE

Shábán 1433 – July 2012

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh, solely with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه and the du'ás of well-wishers, this booklet, For Friends Booklet Number Twenty Three, is being presented to you.

Ikhlás – sincerity – is a topic that has been discussed innumerable times. One may be forgiven for thinking that there is nothing new to be discussed as far as ikhlás is concerned. However, what about sidq? What is sidq? How important is sidq? What relationship does sidq have with ikhlás?

These are important questions and these are answered by Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه in this majlis. Other topics are also discussed.

As we are all aware, several topics are discussed in a majlis, not necessarily related to the main theme of the majlis.

One of the amazing qualities of our mashá'ikh that we have noted is their ability to re-cast familiar topics in a completely new light. Very often we are made to feel that this is the first time that this particular topic has been discussed, even though it may have been discussed previously. At other times, when a familiar topic is explained to us, it is done with a new

angle, leaving the listener amazed at not having thought of the topic in the light that it is being explained on this occasion. This also applies to qissas as well. Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه repeated certain qissas quite often. The same qissah may be repeated in a different form, very often with a different light being shed on the qissah and a different lesson learnt.

Readers are also reminded that the majális are directed at the people attending the majlis. The tone of the majlis is also determined by who is present. It is important to bear this in mind in order to understand the context of the advices given.

Alhamdulilláh, this issue of "For Friends" has translations of two majális.

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us all proper understanding and also the ability to act on the valuable advices contained in these majális.

Passing away of Hadhrat Mauláná Safiyulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه, (Bháíján)

Hadhrat Mauláná Safiyulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه, popularly known as "Bháíján", son of our Hadhrat Mauláná Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه passed away in a private clinic in Delhi, India, on Friday, the 3rd March 2012.

His body was taken to Jalálábád for burial. News had spread like wildfire and there were throngs of people at his janázah. The crowd was estimated to be approximately 100,000. His janázah took place after Ishá.

He had been ill for some time and had to use a wheelchair to get around. Nevertheless, as the principal, he attended to the affairs of Madrasah Miftáhul-Ulúm punctually throughout his illness till the very last, being taken by car to the madrasah.

He was born in Aligarh, being the only son of our Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه. Initially, he was taught by Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه and then, later, he studied at Hadhrat's Miftáhul-Ulúm in Jalálábád, where he qualified in the year 1959. On graduating he immediately started teaching at the very same institute. In 1977 he was appointed the principal of the dárul-'ulúm, continuing with teaching as well.

Hadhrat "Bháíján" (Mauláná Safiyulláh Khán Sáhib) رحمة الله عليه had travelled

to several countries with our Hadhrat, and he endeared himself to all those who came to know him. The love that little children had for him was quite remarkable, something which we ourselves had all witnessed.

In 1992 he was granted Khiláfat by our Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه. After Hadhrat's رحمة الله عليه demise he carried on his normal duties as well as conducting the after-Jumu'ah majlis which our Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه had conducted.

He himself made people bai'at and had given khiláfat to several people as we.

We make du'á that Alláh Ta'álá fills his qabr with núr and grant him high stages in Jannat.

Dr. I.M.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه in Jalálábád, India, on Tuesday, the 22nd Muharram, 1411, corresponding to the 14th August, 1990.]

IKHLÁS AND SIDQ – SINCERITY AND VERACITY

[A beggar arrived and Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه gave him two rupís. After the beggar had left Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه started speaking. Very often a majlis would commence in this manner. Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه did not have any prepared notes that he conducted a majlis with. It often happened that somebody would ask a question or some incident would occur and this would then be the starting point of the majlis that followed, as happened on this occasion]

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

نَحْمَدُهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

Be indebted to the beggar

Many beggars come here on a continuous basis. Alhamdulilláh, whatever Alláh Ta'álá grants taufíq for, I keep on giving.

Some tend to be very quarrelsome. They keep on coming regularly. I have told them that they should be happy with whatever I give them, whether I give them twenty or ten or five.

One should not boast of favours conferred on beggars. Alláh Ta'álá states:

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تُبْطِلُوْا صَدَقٰتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْاَذٰى

O you who believe! Do not make your charity worthless by reproach and injury (insult). (S2.264.)

Explaining it in other words: O Muslims! Do not destroy the thawáb of your sadaqát by boasting about it and causing difficulties but rather consider it a favour of the beggar that, through him, we have been given the taufíq to give sadaqát. And we should continuously ask Alláh Ta'álá for taufíq. The du'á of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is as follows:

اَللّٰهُمَّ وَفِّقْنِيْ لِمَا تُحِبُّ وَتَرْضٰى مِنَ الْقَوْلِ وَالْعَمَلِ وَالْفِعْلِ وَالنِّيَّةِ وَالْهُدٰى

اِنَّكَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ

O Alláh! Grant me the ability [to do] that which You love and are pleased with, be it a word, an act, a deed, an intention or a method [way]. Surely You have power over everything.

This is the statement of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. So, we should continually ask for taufíq from Haqq Ta'álá. And we should feel indebted to the beggar. Otherwise, as it appears in the Hadíth Sharíf, such an era will also appear that the Muslims will go searching for people to give zakát to but will find no one who will accept the zakát.

That is why Haqq Ta'álá, at a different place, addresses the ashábe-taqwá (the pious), as follows:

فَلَا تُزَكُّوْٓا اَنْفُسَكُمْ ۗ هُوَ اَعْلَمُ بِمَنِ اتَّقٰى ۝

And do not claim purity for yourselves. He knows best about him who turns away (from evil). (S.53.32.)

Do not consider yourself to be pious. Do not believe yourself to be holy.

Only Alláh Ta'álá knows very well who is really pious. It can be that, despite adopting taqwá, it is possible that there is included in it such an item of which you have no inkling of but which is in the knowledge of Haqq Ta'álá and which taints and spoils the taqwá. This knowledge will be with Alláh Ta'álá and not with us.

Ikhlás is no trifling thing, dear friend. It is a very elevated quality. By acting contrary to ikhlás, shierk has appeared, even though it is not shierk in i'tiqád.

The Súfiyá-e-muhiqqiqín and mudiqqiqín have proof from the Qur'án and Hadíth Sharíf for their claims. Haqq Ta'álá states:

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوْ لِقَآءَ رَبِّهٖ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَّلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهٖٓ أَحَدًا ۝

And whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and associate no one in the worship of his Lord. (S.18.110.)

Note that here it is not stated: "in the worship of Alláh", but what appears is: "in the worship of his Lord (Rabb)". There is a subtle point in this also.

So, just see: it is stated that do not associate any partner in the 'ibádat of your Rabb. The mufassirín have stated that here the word "shierk" actually refers to "riyá" (show). It is possible that in the 'ibádat of the muttaqí there is riyá that is khafí (concealed/ light). Just see: In this áyet there is an invitation to ikhlás. The translation of the áyet would be as follows: Whoever has hope of meeting his Rabb should perform pious deeds and not associate any partners in the 'ibádat of his Rabb.

The bounty of being able to breathe

It has been indicated in this áyet that, yes, there is death after life here. After death will come Qiyámat where the meeting with Alláh Ta'álá will take place. There will take place accountability for each and every grain consumed and every drop of liquid drunk.

So, now a Muslim should ponder: "How should I live in this world? I will be called to account for every breath I take. I will be asked, 'What rights have I fulfilled for the breath I inhaled?' If air did not enter, what would have happened? What if the air that was inhaled could not be exhaled?"

When you were sleeping were you breathing out of your own volition and choice? If your breathing were to have slowed down and stopped and death were to have faced you, what would have been your situation?

One breathes without a conscious effort and without having to exert oneself. Inhaling and exhaling take place without any meditation and research. What would have happened if one's breathing depended on deep pondering? These are matters for consideration.

My dear children, save yourselves from foreign thoughts.

Negating the creation and instilling love for Alláh Ta'álá

The Kalimah-Tayyibah is such a phrase that has "Lá" (لا – No) in its commencement. The "Lá" cuts off all those passions, desires and connections with the creation, which are impediments obstructing from connecting with the Creator. "Lá" has negated all these.

Yes, that creation that is the means and intermediary for an increase in one's connection with the Creator, connection with such a creation is actually connection with the Creator. It is not considered being connected to the creation because it has become the means of the creation being connected to a greater degree with the Real Creator (Kháliqe-Haqíqí).

Actually, there is a request from Alláh Ta'álá for access to such creations who will cause an increase in the connection with the Creator. So much so that Rasúlulláh صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم himself had made this request:

اَللّٰهُمَّ ارْزُقْنِيْ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يَّنْفَعُنِيْ حُبُّهٗ عِنْدَكَ

O Alláh! Grant me the rizq of Your muhabbat and (this is my request to You), grant me the rizq of the muhabbat of that person also whose muhabbat for You is an aid and assistance in attaining Your muhabba

It is proved from this Hadíth Sharíf that the love of that creation that is of benefit in the love of the Creator is not love for the creation but actually love for the Creator. In the Hadíth Sharíf love has been interpreted as "rizq".

In a similar manner, that deed that is a cause for an increase in muhabbat of Alláh Ta'álá, that deed is also for Alláh Ta'álá, as is stated:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْئَلُكَ حُبَّكَ وَحُبَّ مَنْ يُّحِبُّكَ وَ حُبَّ عَمَلٍ يُّقَرِّبُنِيْ اِلٰى حُبِّكَ

O Alláh! I ask of You Your love and the love of that person who has love for You; and the taufíq of the love of such a deed which will draw me closer to You.

Otherwise, there is a statement to the opposite effect:

اَعُوْذُ بِعِزَّتِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا عَمِلْتُ

I seek protection in Your Honour from the evil of my deeds.

And there is another statement:

اَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ سَاعَةِ السُّوْٓءِ وَمِنْ صَاحِبِ السُّوْٓءِ

I seek Your protection from the evil hour and the evil companion.

What type of companion is that? What is that type of deed? These are such as will bring a decrease in the muhabbat of Haqq Ta'álá. How can you socialise with him? How can you come and go there?

So Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had asked to be protected from the evil deed and to be protected from the evil hour. That is why, by means of the "Lá" in "Lá-iláha", all these have been cut off and negated. Whatever is good has not been negated.

In this "Lá" is included all evils and sins. So how can there be continued perpetrations of sins? This sentence deserves to be pondered on and repeated perpetually.

Minor occasional lapses are overlooked

Yes, by the token of being human, one may err – if it happened it happened. Just as the word "insán" has the root "uns" (love) in it literally, it also has the quality of "nisyán" (forgetfulness) in it from the aspect of attributes. So, occasionally, there will be forgetfulness and, occasionally, there will be falling into sin. There is no question of being called to account. Minor lapses will occur. Alláh Ta'álá states:

اَلَّذِيْنَ يَجْتَنِبُوْنَ كَبٰٓئِرَ الْإِثْمِ وَالْفَوَاحِشَ إِلَّا اللَّمَمَ ؕ

For those who avoid major sins and indecent behaviour, except minor

offences. (S.53.32.)

The gist of this is that you should keep on saving yourselves from obscenities and foul actions. Alláh Ta'álá does not look at your petty infringements. Your existence is from the "mumkinát" (possibilities). Therefore, error is also possible. But how can there be persistence in evil deeds? In this evil is included sins. In this evil is included the evil companion, the evil friend. All this forms part of shierk, from the aspect of deeds and not from the aspect of 'aqá'id.

Just now an áyet was recited that one should not associate any partners in the 'ibádat of one's Rabb. In other words, do not let riyá intrude in that righteous deed (amal-sáleh) that you perform. By the contamination of riyá that deed ceases to be righteous in its correct meaning and complete methodology. To the contrary, it will be muddied.

There is a special point in regard to the first portion of the áyet: "And whoever hopes to meet his Lord". Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "You are hopeful of meeting Me and, simultaneously, you are committing shierk-e-amalí by way of riyá. How can the two be compatible?"

Ridhá – the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá – is a stipulation

Another point: In performing any righteous deed there is the stipulation that it should be for the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá (ridhá). That deed with which Alláh Ta'álá is pleased will be termed a righteous deed. And that deed which does not draw the ridhá of Alláh Ta'álá will not be called a righteous deed.

Outwardly a deed may appear to be righteous but, if it does not fall within the category of ridhá as defined by the laws of the Sharí'at, how can it be termed to be drawing the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá?

For example: The person is making namáz at the time of zawál. The act of namáz is amal-sáleh but ridhá is not a quality in it because of the prohibited time of zawál.

Another example: A person fasts on the day of Íd. The fasting is an amal-sáleh but there is no ridhá because fasting is prohibited on the day of Íd.

Another example: A person got up after midnight and read nafl namáz. He also recited the Qur'án Sharíf and he also made zikr. Thereafter he rested

and fell asleep, so much so that he missed his Fajr namáz with jamá'at.

My dear brother! Why did you sleep at such a time that you did not perform your Fajr with jamá'at? So, the amal-sáleh was combined with sú (evil) in that namáz with jamá'at was discarded. Better than this was for him to have slept through the night and got up with the Fajr azán and made his namáz with jamá'at. He had given such importance to what was nafl that he missed out on the namáz with jamá'at. Thus, sú was combined with amal-sáleh.

Namáz in solitude versus namáz with jamá'at

In the same manner, some people do not perform namáz with jamá'at in order to have greater khushú'. They say: "We have experienced it many times that we do not have as much khushú' in our namáz when performed with jamá'at as when we perform the namáz in solitude at home." That is why they perform their namáz at home and not in the masjid with jamá'at.

O bondsmen of Alláh! O jáhil! That namáz – with its attendant wasáwis – that is performed in the masjid with jamá'at is thousands of times superior to that namáz performed in solitude at home with full khushú'. That person who goes to the masjid to perform his namáz is the bondsman of the Sharí'at – that is, he is subservient. Whereas you, the one who is performing his namáz at home, are a bondsman of your temperament. And the bondsman of the temperament is termed a mushrik; and the bondsman of the Sharí'at is called a bondsman of Alláh.

So, just see: he considers himself to be mukhlis (sincere) whereas the Sharí'at considers him to be a mushrik, this being mushrik-amalí, and not i'tiqádí.

Qissah – the Sháhsáhib of Patyálah

A Sháhsáhib, a resident of Patyálah, once came here. He had a thousand muríds. I was still staying over there.

[Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه pointed to the house across the courtyard from the majliskhánah. This was now the residence of his son, Bháíján.-Tr.]

He stayed for several days and discussions on the masá'il of Sulúk took

place regularly. He had also mentioned that he had met a number of mashá'ikh before coming here.

One day we were sitting and having a discussion. The azán for Asr was given. I stood up and went to perform my namáz in the masjid. He did not go. After performing namáz I came and sat by him and asked him: "Did you not go to the masjid to perform namáz?" He replied: "I performed my namáz here." I asked: "Why?" He replied: "At the time I was in such a spiritual state that, had I stood up, that state would not have remained with me."

I said to him: "There are three states: Hálate-gaibat (oblivion), hálate-istigráq (absorption) and hálate-sukr (spiritual intoxication).** So, were you in such a state of ghaibat that you neither heard the azán nor were you aware of people going for namáz and that I was going for namáz? Were you so engrossed?"

*[**Theses technical terms appearing above are explained in greater detail at the end of this majlis. -Tr.]*

He replied: "No. I was not in such a state, but I was fully cognisant – I heard the azán and I was also aware of your going for namáz."

This poor fellow was ignorant. That is why it is fardh to attain knowledge of the Sharí'at to the degree of necessity. Without acquiring this degree of knowledge it was not permissible for him to become a sheikh. How can that person who is ignorant of the Sharí'at be a sheikh?

Now, it does not matter whether one acquires this 'ilm by studying the detailed Arabic kitábs; or one acquires this 'ilm by studying authentic Urdú kitábs; or whether one acquires this 'ilm by regularly asking some 'álim; or one acquires this 'ilm by regular attendance at the majális of an 'álim and listening attentively. However, definitely acquire 'ilm.

Hadhrat Sheikh Abdul-Quddús Gangohí رحمة الله عليه acquiring 'ilm

Sheikh Abdul-Quddús Gangohí رحمة الله عليه presented himself in the service of Sheikh Abdul-Haqq رحمة الله عليه in Radúlwí. By the way, this qissah was related to us by Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه. On arriving there, he requested to become bai'at. Sheikh Abdul-Haqq رحمة الله عليه asked him: "Have you acquired any 'ilme-Dín?" Sheikh Abdul-Quddús Gangohí رحمة الله عليه replied that he had not as yet.

Sheikh Abdul-Haqq رحمة الله عليه told him: “Then entering Sulúk will result in you going astray. First acquire some ’ilm of Dín, then come back.”

Do you see? Acquiring ’ilm has been given priority over Sulúk. In that era the centre for ’ilme-Dín was Delhi.

Sheikh Abdul-Quddús Gangohí رحمة الله عليه responded: “Very well. I have no objections.” As he stood up to depart Sheikh Abdul-Haqq رحمة الله عليه said: “Listen carefully. It seems that when you return after completing your studies, I will not be still alive. Be as it may. My son will be alive. You will benefit from him.” Sheikh Abdul-Quddús Gangohí رحمة الله عليه replied: “Very well. As you say.”

Today, if one were to tell somebody that you should connect yourself for your isláh to such and such a person who is also in our silsilah, he will never accept this. Not accepting this other sheikh shows that this person does not accept even this sheikh. If he had accepted this sheikh he would have accepted the other person as a sheikh. Seeing that he is not prepared to accept this other person indicates that he does not accept the first sheikh also.

Difference between knowing (ján-ná) and believing (mán-ná)

If a person says that he believes in Alláh but he does not believe in His Messenger – even when proof of him being a Messenger has been provided by Alláh Ta’álá by way of miracles, these miracles being proof and witness of Messengership – indicates that he does not really believe in Alláh. When the evidence as to him being a Messenger is presented from Alláh and he still does not believe this, how can it be said that he believes in Alláh Ta’álá?

Have you understood the point, molvísáhib?

The name given to belief (mán-ná) is ímán. Just to know (ján-ná) is not termed ímán. All the kuffár know Alláh but such mere knowledge does not make the person a mu’min.

Similarly, merely to know a person as being a sheikh does not make the person a muríd – believing him to be such makes the person a muríd. And if he does not have this belief then he is not termed a muríd. Further, if a muríd, after having been guided to establish an isláhí relationship with

any sheikh, says: “I do not have any aqídat (faith and confidence) in him”, then he should have stayed at a distance from the sheikh. This person is not a “muríd” but a “maríd”, as is stated in the Qur’án Sharíf:

شَيْطَانًا مَّرِيْدًا ۙ

Shaitán – an obstinate rebel (S.4.117.)

Just see: Sheikh Abdul Quddús Gangohí رحمة الله عليه accepted the advice and departed to acquire ’ilm. When he returned after having completed his studies, he found that his sheikh had indeed passed away. He established an isláhí relationship with his son because this is what his sheikh had instructed him to do. In this way he derived benefit from both sides.

We had digressed on this qissah when we said that an ignorant person cannot be a sheikh. We had mentioned the condition of the sheikhsahib from Patyálah who had discarded namáz with jamá’at because of the special spiritual state he was experiencing at the time. I had asked him if he was in ghaibat or istigráq. The third possibility of sukr is a very, very elevated condition where the veils, the barriers are lifted. This is a very, very elevated state. He had replied that it was none of these states: he had heard the azán and he had seen me departing for namáz.

Then I told him that the namáz read with jamá’at, with the accompanying wasáwis, was thousands of times better than that namáz read in solitude with the special spiritual state he was experiencing. The namáz with jamá’at is according to the Sharí’at, whereas the namáz in solitude is according to one’s personal temperament. After hearing this explanation then only did his eyes open.

The poor fellow was ignorant. He just did not have this knowledge. Neither was he acquainted with the masá’il of Sulúk nor was he acquainted with the masá’il of the Sharí’at. Such a person is not a sheikh but merely a pír.

The difference between a sheikh and a mere pír

You should know that being a sheikh is one thing and being a mere pír is another. “Wazífí” (one reciting liturgies) is a pír, that he discards what is wájib and places undue importance to what is nafl. Just see what an excellent sheikh he is!

[This last statement was made in sarcasm. – Tr.]

On the other hand, who is a real sheikh? He is one who is a "sáhibe-fin" – an expert in his field. The sheikh in any field is one who knows the basic principles of that field and he knows many of the corollaries. He also has knowledge on how to derive corollaries from these basic principles. Also, other expert scholars in the same field consult him.

This topic has come to be mentioned incidentally.

I was saying that to attain ikhlás one has to discard shierke-khafí (minor shierk). This is a very elevated level. When this "ikhlás" appears then there is "khulásí".

*[This a play of words:*اخلاص *(sincerity) and* خلاصى *(freedom/ release)-Tr.]*

Take note of the words I am using: ikhlás and khulásí. When sincerity has truly arrived then there is release!

I wish to say something but commoners are also here. The majlise-khás has ceased to exist. Nobody sits for such a special majlis. However, what I wish to say is that when sincerity appears then there is release. Absolutely no question can arise that there can be a situation where ikhlás appears and there is no khulásí.

Why? The reason is that when a person chooses ímán he has discarded major kufr and shierk. In the same manner when ikhlás, in its true meaning, arrives minor shierk is also discarded. Now there is just no question that there is no release.

Is my voice reaching you or not?

I am saying that when ikhlás has been attained in its true meaning then there is no question that the akhláqe-razílah – all of them – will be removed all at once. In actual fact, if strong (or forceful) ikhlás has been attained then there will be absolute freedom from all the akhláqe-razílah.

Arè! To what extent are you going to remedy each of the blameworthy qualities, one by one? And for how long are you going to carry on? In order to do this you need the lifetime of Hadhrat Khidr!عليه السلام. Arè! Develop ikhlás and you will have remedied them all!

Brothers! Has my voice reached you or not?

To cure the blameworthy characteristics one by one requires a great deal of striving and effort (mujáhadah) and one's body will also wither away.

So, this is gladdening news that, in order to have one's isláh made, firstly, develop ikhlás and then, secondly, search to find out what is the correct method of carrying out this task.

Is my voice reaching you, molvísáhib?

When ikhlás has arrived in its true meaning then the temperament will direct its attention towards the hukum (orders) of Haqq Ta'álá. However, it could happen that there is ikhlás but not sidq.

Defining sidq & ikhlás

The essence of sidq is that the manner in which whatever deed or 'ibádat that the Sharí'at has ordered one to perform, to carry out that deed or 'ibádat in the manner specified.

Ikhlás, on the other hand, means that there is no other objective of any type and at any time in performing deeds except that of the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá (ridhá-e-Iláhí).

So, it can happen that in any act or deed there is ikhlás but not sidq. But it cannot happen that there is sidq and not ikhlás. The reason is that ikhlás is encompassed in the definition of sidq.

The two share the relation of umúm-wa-khusús-mutlaq. In Logic, four types of relations are explained between any two universal concepts. They are: Tasáwí, tabáyun, umúm-wa-khusús-mutlaq and umúm-khusús-min-wajhin. Hopefully you would have studied Logic and, furthermore, understood it.

[A brief explanation of the terms of Logic mentioned above:

Tasáwí is the equal application of one universal concept to another and vice versa.

For example: sea and ocean share the relation of tasáwí as every ocean is a sea and every sea is an ocean.

Tabáyun is the incompatibility between two entities where none of the two is applicable to the other.

For example: night and day share the relation of tabáyun. No night is ever day and vice versa.

Umúm-wa-khusús-mutlaq is the relation of two universal concepts where

one is applicable to every member of the other whilst the second applies to certain or some of the first.

Example: Every Rasúl is a nabí whilst not all Ambiyá were Rasúls. The reason for this is that in Islamic terminology a Rasúl is a nabí who was instructed with a new Sharí'ah.

Umúm-khusús-min-wajhin is when both the concepts apply to certain members of the other one's class, not all.

Example: Háfiz and 'álim . Some huffáz are 'álims and vice versa. Not all 'álims are huffáz and nor are all huffáz 'álims.]

[The explanations appearing above have been provided by Madrasah-Ashraful-Uloom, De Deur -Tr.]

Where there is sidq, therefore, there will definitely be ikhlás, and where there is ikhlás it does not necessarily follow that sidq will also be present. In essence Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم is telling us that in every deed there must be ikhlás and there must also be sidq. The áyet mentioned earlier mentions ikhlás:

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوْ لِقَآءَ رَبِّهٖ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهٖٓ أَحَدًا ۝

And whoever hopes to meet his Lord, let him do righteous deeds and associate no one in the worship of his Lord. (S.18.110.)

This has been explained in detail.

Qissah of a sahábí رضى الله تعالى عنه told to repeat his namáz

There was a sahábí رضى الله تعالى عنه, newly entered into Islám, who had not performed his namáz in the correct manner by not observing the various rules and he was told to repeat his namáz. When he realised that he was not performing his namáz as it should have been performed, he then enquired as to the correct method and etiquettes, according to the laws of Alláh Ta'álá.

So, there is the need to seek 'ilm because, without 'ilm, one cannot know the correct method of performing a deed. Having gained this 'ilm, together with ikhlás the sidq of that deed has also been achieved.

If a deed is performed without the correct methodology there may be

ikhlás but there will be no sidq. There is still a defect. There is no perfection in it. In what way?

Listen! The qissah of the sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه is as follows: He was performing namáz. Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم arrived on the scene. The sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه completed his namáz by making the salám. Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم told him,

قُمْ فَصَلِّ فَاِنَّكَ لَمْ تُصَلِّ

"Stand up. Perform namáz because you have not performed namáz."

In actual fact, he had performed namáz. For whom did he perform namáz? Keep in mind that he was a sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه. My talk is in the form of a lesson and not in the form of that of a sheikh or of pírs. I am a tálibe-'ilm and I speak like a student of Dín. Here lessons are taught without the aid of kitábs, with taufíq-e-Iláhí, with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of Hadhratwálá.رحمة الله علیه.

To continue: That was a sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه and a sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه has ikhlás. If there is no ikhlás – Na-úzubilláh! Na-úzubilláh! – then there will be riyá in that sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه. Who dares to say that a sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه has riyá? To the contrary, there definitely was ikhlás. It is in relation to this namáz with ikhlás that Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم said: "Stand up. Perform namáz because you have not performed namáz."

This humble person, in obedience to Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم , stood up and repeated the namáz. Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم again said: "Stand up. Perform namáz because you have not performed namáz."

He again complied. This happened three times. When he was told the same thing on the fourth occasion, the sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه said: "O Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم , I know only this way of performing namáz. Kindly teach me."

Method of preforming namáz: khushú', khudhú' and sidq

Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم then explained the method of making namáz. "When standing up to perform namáz, recite the takbír. Then, recite whatever portion of the Qur'án is easy. Then perform the rukú' with tranquillity and then stand up. That is, the qowmah should be performed with tranquillity. Then perform the sajdah with tranquillity and go into jalsah

with tranquillity and complete the whole namáz in this manner." When the sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه performed the namáz in this manner Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم did not tell him that he did not perform his namáz and that he had to repeat the namáz.

The question arises: When he had performed namáz initially he was told to repeat the namáz, and when he performed the namáz as was shown to him he was not told to repeat the namáz, so what was the deficiency in his first namáz?

The answer is that there was a deficiency in the sidq – there was no sidq in that namáz. That is, the correct etiquettes of the salát and the tranquillity of the different arkáns that were supposed to have been observed were not observed.

Khushú' is connected to the heart and khudhú' is connected to the parts of the body. Just as the heart should have tranquillity in it, serenity in it, that it should not wander here and there, similarly there should be tranquillity of the different parts of the body. If the different parts of the body move contrary to the stipulated manner then this is contrary to the tranquillity of the body.

For example: Contrary to the calmness required, the hands are moving here and there, sometimes doing this and sometimes doing that. In qiyám, rukú' and sajdah, the eyes are not focused in the stipulated manner. Neither are the hands in control nor are the eyes under control. This is not khudhú'. This is contrary to sidq.

The different postures are performed very hurriedly. Going into rukú', before the hands and body have reached a tranquil state and while there was still some downward movement, he suddenly stands up again. Thereafter, his body should be motionless for a while when standing but, before this could happen, he plunges down into sajdah. Here again, before attaining some tranquillity, he quickly sits up. He has hardly sat when he goes into the second sajdah.

All this is contrary to sidq. He did not carry out the laws according to their specified etiquettes and levels. The sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه was told to repeat his namáz because there was no sidq in his namáz.

A question arises here. The sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه was an 'áshiq of Islám – he

had passionate love for Islám. Therefore, why was there no sidq in his namáz?

The one answer has already been indicated above: This was the initial period of Islám. Laws were revealed in a slow and gradual manner. Up to that stage the sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه was not aware of the nature of sidq. When he gained this knowledge sidq was attained simultaneously.

The second answer: The sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه performed the namáz according to the degree of his knowledge at that stage. He performed the namáz at the level of sidq of his knowledge for which he was accountable (mukallaf). He was not mukallaf for the period before he had gained this knowledge. Therefore, there should be no doubts. I mention this to maintain his status as a sahábí رضی الله تعالی عنه. This was his sidq at that level and he was maqbúl in the eyes of Alláh Ta'álá.

However, Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم wanted him to reach a higher level of maqbúliyet. The Sheikh – that is, Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم wanted to elevate the degree of his sidq. It was as if he was saying: "Because it being the initial period of Islám, this was the level of your sidq according to the level of your knowledge. But the level of sidq is something else when it comes to the knowledge that is with Alláh Ta'álá. Rectify this shortcoming. Acquire its knowledge."

It is apparent that the status of 'ilm of the Sharí'at is very high. There is no way of getting out of it. Having said that, it must be pointed out that it is not necessary to study the detailed Arabic kitábs to acquire this knowledge. As was pointed out earlier, this 'ilm could be acquired by studying accredited kitábs in Urdú (or other languages) or by asking a reliable 'álim or by attending the majlis of a reliable 'álim.

The Hadíth Sharíf states that it is compulsory to acquire 'ilm:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيْضَةٌ

It is fardh (compulsory) to seek 'ilm.

The Hadíth Sharíf does not state that it is compulsory to study kitábs. 'Ilm commenced right at the beginning. The compilation of kitábs came only afterwards. Yes, the writing down of the Qur'án Sharíf and Hadíth Sharíf

already commenced in the time of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم – the writing was on bones, leaves and skins of animals. The art of writing existed from before.

The written word commenced from early times

Arè! Listen very carefully to what I wish to say! The art of writing existed from ancient times. Haqq Ta'álá had written down on the Preserved Tablet – the Lowhe-Mahfúz – everything before these things came into existence. Thereafter these were sent down.

Is there some "pakká-háfiz" sitting here? Or is there only a "Ramadhání-háfiz" here? There is a category called "Ramadhání-háfiz" also: he is one who can recite the Qur'án Sharíf but if he is asked to recite just a little before a particular passage, he has no idea what to recite. This is a "Ramadhání-háfiz".

It appears in the Qur'án Sharíf:

نٓ وَالْقَلَمِ وَمَا يَسْطُرُوْنَ ۙ

Nún. By the pen and what they write (with it). (S.68.1.)

Initially is "Nún" then appear two oaths. Oho! Alláh Ta'álá is taking an oath and the oath is on the pen. Where Alláh Ta'álá has taken oaths on other items, He has taken an oath on the pen as well.

What type of item is the pen? Where will the pen be? It will be held by the fingers. Where are the fingers? They belong to the hand. Where is the hand? It is in the body. Now what can this faqír say in connection with the oath? Why is the oath taken on the pen? I do not know what the different items are that become necessary upon this oath – what becomes liable and what becomes necessary, mauláná-sáhibán?

To continue: So, writing has also become necessary, especially in our times where memories have become very weak. Writing is especially necessary for us students of Dín. If one is truly a student of Dín then one should keep pen and paper with one and immediately note down the precious lectures of the ustád.

The difference between "talab" and "kasab"

I am speaking to the tálibe-'ilm and not to the kásibe-'ilm. A tálibe-'ilm is one and the kásibe-'ilm is another.

[Talab of 'ilm: to earnestly seek knowledge; to pursue it all out; to have an obsession of gaining 'ilm.

Kasab of 'ilm: to treat 'ilm merely for the sake of earning an income; to study as a mere formality.-Tr.]

Where does a tálibe-'ilm have the opportunity to allow his heart to think about this and that? If he has no time to study then he is not a tálibe-'ilm. He is a kásibe-'ilm.

Just see: When it comes to seeking halál, tayyib dunyá, despite the fact that it is tayyib, the Hadíth Sharíf has used the word "kasab" (to seek). The word "talab" (to desire) has not been used. Ponder a bit!

Learning and teaching has been made very easy. Learning and teaching has been made a sport. Do you understand, mauláná-sáhib?

I was saying that when it comes to explaining the task of attaining halál tayyib the word "kasab" has been used and it has not been described by the word "talab".

طَلَبُ كَسْبِ الْحَلَالِ فَرِيْضَةٌ بَعْدَ الْفَرِيْضَةِ

Earning halál is fardh after the other fardhs.

The reason why the term "kasab" has been used and not the term "talab" is because talab demands that one should completely immerse oneself in acquiring one's objective to the extent that one is not diverted to anything else. So, how can one attach oneself, have oneself bound and to immerse oneself in anything else? This is the difference between talab and kasab.

It is apparent that kasab does not demand fikr (thought and concern) but requires superficiality. Talab demands thought and concern. Superficiality is not sufficient.

With the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá and the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh the difference between talab and kasab has been explained to you. Talab desires fikr. Kasab does not demand this. And fikr can only be one. So, how can there be fikr in another direction with the fikr of 'ilm? No. That person is a tálibe-'ilm, tálibe-tarbiyet, tálibe-akhláqe-hasanah,

tálibe-wusúl-ilal-Haqq who submerges himself in the talab of his objective. Have you understood these issues? To be a kásib of an item is easy. To be a tálib of an item is difficult. O you students! Acquire 'ilm with great zeal! Listen carefully to what this servant has to say further on, with the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá.

Honour and disgrace for dunyá and for Dín

It is not necessary to fall into disgrace for the sake of kasab. Whereas it is necessary to place oneself in disgrace for the sake of talab.

Just think and ponder! This is no ordinary matter. Just look at that person who has talab for the dunyá how he puts himself to humiliation and disgrace in acquiring dunyá. He is not concerned at how others consider him to be contemptible and disgraced. So, in contrast to this person, even more so, why should the tálibe-ákhirat be concerned about the contempt of others? How can this not be tolerated? The difference between kasab and talab is like the difference between the heavens and the earth.

In actual fact, one should not disgrace oneself in kasabe-dunyá. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has said:

اَلسُّؤَالُ ذِلٌّ

To ask (beg) is disgraceful

Just see. Permission has not being given to beg in order to attain dunyá because there is disgrace in it.

In essence, the tálibe-ákhirat should not be bothered about others as to what people will say.

Qissah of the person not performing namáz in the train

I am reminded of a qissah related in a majlis of Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه. The majlis after Zuhr was in progress when a person came. Greetings were exchanged. Whilst conversing he mentioned: "I did not perform my namáz while I was travelling in the train." Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه asked: "Why did you not perform your namáz?" He replied: "The coach was full of Hindus. The thought came to me that if I were to perform my namáz in their presence, performing rukú' and sajdah in front of them, it must not happen that these people would laugh at me." On hearing this immediately

Hadhratwálá was filled with jalál and he said very tersely: "These people also laugh at our ímán – so we should also leave aside our ímán? Leave the majlis!" He was expelled from the majlis.

I have mentioned this incident by way of illustration.

To continue: Worldly people do not bother about honour and disgrace in earning dunyá. So, should a tálibe-ákhirat bother? Just see: dunyá is an objective and the person goes to Calcutta, he travels to Delhi, he visits Murádábád – he wants to see where items are bought cheaply and where they are sold more expensively. He buys from the cheaper source and goes to sell at the more profitable outlet. He is on the move all the time, hustling and bustling. He is not concerned about his meals. He sacrifices his sleep. He is not worried about his house and comforts, not bothered about what may befall him along his travels. He is completely finishing himself. So, is this a kásib of dunyá or is he a tálib of dunyá.

The tálibe-ákhirat should feel ashamed when compared to the tálibe-dunyá. He should feel embarrassed. Just see to what extent has the tálibe-dunyá immersed both his body and soul in the desire for dunyá. Where has he the time and opportunity to involve himself in other matters? So, O tálibe-''ilm! What type of tálibe-'ilm are you that you have the time to reserve a place in your heart for matters unrelated to 'ilm?

Yes, the pious of previous eras were tálibe-'ilm in the correct meaning of the word. Just listen to their qissas! Read about their dedication! These were said to be tálibe-'ilm!

To continue: The talk was on ikhlás. When there is ikhlás then he will be involved sincerely, body and soul, in acquiring 'ilm. Without detailed 'ilm there may be ikhlás but there will be no sidq. The concept of sidq was explained that sidq is to perform a task in the manner in which the Sharí'at has ordered, to the level of its perfection (kamál). And, without learning the rules and etiquettes, it is not possible to perform that task to a degree of perfection.

So, to what degree is it not fardh to learn 'ilm because on this is dependent the performance of a task to perfection, which is fardh. Because of a lack of 'ilm the namáz of the sahábí رضی اللہ تعالی عنہ whose qissah was mentioned above, had ikhlás in it but lacked sidq. It is a different issue that, it being

the initial phase of Islám, he was operating at his level of sidq. In that, it was praiseworthy. However, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم – the Sheikh – desired that he attain a higher level of sidq than what he had. By performing his namáz as shown to him, he attained this level of sidq.

Thus, in every action, as it is necessary to attain the level of ikhlás, so it is necessary to have the level of sidq also. Otherwise there will be a defect in it. That is why the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم was sent in order to demonstrate every action. It could also have been possible for every detail to have been written down and the Qur'án Sharíf sent down as slates with the order to follow these written instructions. But this was not done. The complete Islámic lifestyle is a practical one, one which the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم demonstrated: As he does, so must you do.

It is a different matter that there is no substitute for the original. However, this imitation is also very, very close to the original. Seeing it is very, very close then there is nearness (qurb) as well. We have been made responsible of following the "Uswah-Hasanah". Alláh Ta'álá states:

لَّقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِيْ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

Verily, in the Messenger of Alláh you have a good example. (S.33.21.).

The whole practical life of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم – physical, economic, personality and character-wise, his dealings, social inter-relationships and 'ibádat-related – is in front of us. He demonstrated everything for our benefit. This was passed on by others by being strictly copied and imitated. Now that this was passed on by strict copying and imitating, we have to look at our pious elders – our akábir – who are the road to this Uswah-Hasanah. It is not possible for us to see with our eyes the practical life of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم . However, his obedient followers and deputies are present. It is compulsory to see them.

One can gauge from this what the quality of the lifestyle of the 'ulemá should be – those who have been referred to as the heirs of the Ambiyá – from the aspects of 'ibádat, mu'ámalah, mu'ásharah and akhláq. Just make an assessment.

Khushú and the demands of khashiyet

There has to be both ikhlás and sidq in their actions, in their behaviour and character, in their social relationships and in their dealings. There has to be extreme khushú' and extreme khudhú'. This khushú' is not only to be attained in namáz – in namáz this khushú' is an objective for acceptance (maqbúliyet). However, Alláh Ta'álá has made this khushú' of the heart an objective all the time.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has asked to be protected from a heart devoid of khushú':

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ قَلْبٍ لَّا يَخْشَعُ

O Alláh! I seek protection from such a heart that has no khushú'.

Opposing this khushú' are the qualities of cruelty and harshness. This khushú' arises from "khashiyet". Alláh Ta'álá states, referring to the mountains:

خَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللّٰهِ

Humblesd, split asunder from the fear of Alláh. (S59.21.)

When there is khashiyet of Alláh Ta'álá in the heart then will there be khushú' – or will there be cruelty?

Ponder over it. With the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá the topic has been expanded to greater depths.

When there is khushú then there will be khashiyet. And when there is khashiyet then there will be khushú'. We now have to ponder whether there is greater cruelty or greater khushú' within us? Is there greater tenderness, or greater hard-heartedness?

In the Qur'án Sharíf Alláh Ta'álá has attributed hard-heartedness to the kuffár.

[Tr.- There was a momentary pause, whereafter Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه with some exuberance, exclaimed:]

Ohoho! Wáh! Alláh-miyán! Wáh! That áyet has been instilled in my heart. Alhamdulilláh! Shukran-lilláh!

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْآ أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوْبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِاللهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ

Is the time not ripe for the hearts of those who believe to submit to Alláh's reminder and to the truth which is revealed? (S.57.16.)

Listen carefully to what I say! O those who believe! O mu'mins! When will the time arrive that khushú' will develop in your hearts? What time are you in anticipation of? What hour are you awaiting, O mu'mins? What, has khushú' not developed in your hearts as yet?

Has Alláh Ta'álá demanded khushú' or hard-heartedness from the believers? The answer is obvious – it is khushú'. Should this be only in namáz or all the time? Again, the obvious answer is: all the time.

Ponder on this for a bit, O you students, O you 'ulemá! By the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá these issues are being presented to you.

Is it the demands of your 'ilm that you should have hard-heartedness, with your own and with others? When you set foot in your house, you did so with heartlessness and not with khushú'. When you set foot outside you did so with heartlessness and not with khushú'. What, is this the demands of ímán?

It is because of ímán that you say that you are mu'min. Yes, you may be a mu'min but you do not possess kamále-ridhá – perfection in pleasing Alláh Ta'álá. This is a defect. Kamále-ridhá is a condition for acceptance.

I lament that I am not a háfiz, or else I would have recited the full áyet. Is there a háfiz here?

[Some huffáz proceeded to read the remainder of the áyet recited above.]

وَلَا يَكُونُوْا كَالَّذِيْنَ أُوتُواالْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوْبُهُمْ ۖ وَكَثِيرٌ مِّنْهُمْ فَاسِقُوْنَ ۝

So that they do not become like those who received the Scripture (Taurah and Injíl); and the time was prolonged for them and so their hearts were hardened; and many of them are evil doers.(S.57.16.)

In other words: Are you trying to be like those people who existed before you, the Ahle-Kitáb, the Jews and the Christians, who were given the Kitáb and a time-period lapsed and their hearts became hardened and many of them became káfir?

It means that we should not become like the Jews and the Christians

who were given the Kitáb and they then proceeded to act contrary to the orders in the Kitáb, descending into lusts and sins; and a time-period went by without them making taubah. As a result of not making taubah their hearts became extremely hardened and the instinctive remorse and regret that accompanies the act of sinning also disappeared. The rot progressed to such an extent that, because of the heartlessness, many from amongst them are káfir.

So, O Muslims! Do not you become like them! Do not let hard-heartedness come even near you. Become habituated to khushú' and immediately make taubah should you commit a sin. It should not happen that sins lead you to kufr. Thus, it is apparent that the demand of ímán is khushú'. A mu'min should be one with khushú'.

Accept Islám in its entirety. Alláh Ta'álá states that one should enter fully and completely into Islám Do not be like those who choose to follow that which is easy and according to their own desires and they leave out that which they find a bit difficult and burdensome.

Summary & du'á

This discussion has been on ikhlás and sidq. Alláh Ta'álá demands both ikhlás and sidq from the mu'min. And the demand of both is that there should be khushú' in the heart. This khushú' should be there all the time. How can there be hardheartedness?

May Alláh Ta'álá keep us all mu'minín firm with ikhlás and sidq until our last breath. Ámín thummah ámín.

*[**Explnations of the technical terms that appeared earlier in this majlis. These definitions and explanations have been taken from the kitábs "Sharí'at and Taríqat" of Hadhrat Thánwí* رحمة الله عليه *and "Sharí'at and Tasawwuf", volume two, of Hadhratjí* رحمة الله عليه *-Tr.]*

Ghaibat

This is when some powerful state descends on the heart, whether this is

when the attributes (sifát) of Alláh Ta'álá become overpowering or whether some thoughts of reward or punishment come to mind, causing one's senses to be in a state of suspension and causing one to be completely unaware of the surroundings.

Istigráq

This is a situation where the spiritual state the person is experiencing is so overpowering that he is not aware of anything else at that moment. The muntahí (accomplished) may experience this state occasionally whereas those in the intermediate phase along the path of Sulúk, the mutawassatín, experience this state frequently.

Proof of this state is to be found in the following incident:

Hadhrat Abú Zarr Ghaffár رضی الله تعالی عنه was going somewhere accompanied by his daughter. Somebody asked him: "This little girl accompanying you – is she your daughter?" Hadhrat Abú Zarr Ghifárí رضی الله تعالی عنه looked carefully at her and then said: "Yes, my wife did say that she is my daughter." Alláh! Alláh! He did not remember even that she was his daughter and had to rely on his wife's statement as proof!

This is a praiseworthy condition (mahmúd) provided that the istigráq does not cause any defect in the laws of the Sharí'at. However, in itself it is no great accomplishment

If it was a very elevated stage Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم would not have said: "My heart desires that I lengthen my namáz but the sound of some infant crying reaches my ears during the namáz and I shorten the namáz with this thought that the mother would be agitated." This indicates that Rasúlulláh صلی الله علیه وسلم was not in a state of istigráq.

Sukr

In this state where the differentiation between the záhirí and bátiní laws are eliminated due to a state descending from the Unseen. When this state goes away and the person returns to normal it is termed "sahú".

Examples:

Incident one: When Fir'oun was about to drown, Hadhrat Jibríl علیه السلام stuffed mud into his mouth in order to stop him uttering such words that

may cause the mercy of Alláh Ta'álá to descend on him, despite the fact that the heart is the basis of acceptance of ímán among other collective conditions. To have stuffed his mouth with mud was the result of this state of sukr. And the reason why this state overpowered Hadhrat Jibríl عليه السلام was an extremely high degree of bugdh-filláh (hatred for the sake of Alláh Ta'álá).

Incident two: This incident involved Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم and Hadhrat Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه . When Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم stood in front of the janázah of the munáfiq Abdulláh bin Ubay, Hadhrat Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه said: "Alláh Ta'álá has forbidden you to read the janázah namáz for him." Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "Alláh Ta'álá has given me the choice (ikhtiyár) – He has not forbidden me."

In this instance as well, the sense of bugdh-filláh descended so heavily on to the heart of Hadhrat Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه that he did not have the slightest idea as to his behaviour towards Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم in his statement and his action. In appearance it appeared very remote from good manners. Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم considered him to be handicapped (ma'zúr).

Later, when Hadhrat Umar رضى الله تعالى عنه returned to his senses, it is stated in the Hadíth Sharíf that he said: "Afterwards I was astounded at my rashness and I felt repentant."

[P.S. The du'ás appearing in this majlis may be found in the kitáb "Munájáte-Maqbúl".]

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدَهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis held by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه *in Jalálábád, India, on Sunday, the 28th Rabí-ul-Ákhir, 1411, corresponding to the 18th November, 1990.]*

ISLÁMIC CULTURE AND LUSTRE

Using taqdír as an excuse is unbecoming

When insán came into the world did he study his taqdír before coming here, that he can say: "What can I do? This was written in my taqdír. What I am doing is according to my taqdír." What, does anybody remember from top to bottom and that he or she will act according to taqdír? No, never!

In actual fact, a person comes with the ikhtiyár (choice and power) that Alláh Ta'álá has given. A person sometimes climbs up, he climbs down, he walks about, he sits and lies down and he sometimes stands. In climbing up or down, sitting, lying and standing he makes use of this ikhtiyár. So, in obedience to the Sharí'at he should also make use of his ikhtiyár.

As Alláh Ta'álá has stated:

فَاذْكُرُوااللهَ قِيٰمًا وَّقُعُوْدًا وَّعَلٰى جُنُوْبِكُمْ ۚ

Remember Alláh standing, sitting and reclining. (S.4.103.)

You should remember Alláh Ta'álá whilst standing, sitting or lying on your sides. In other words, what is ma'múr-bihá – the ikhtiyárí acts we have been commanded to do – continue to do that. And, what is manhí-anhá – the ikhtiyárí acts we have to abstain from – discard these.

Essence of Tasawwuf and Tasawwuf made easy

So, we have to oppose those obstacles that come in the way of performing what is ma'múr-bihá. Similarly, those obstacles that come before us in abstaining from what is manhí-anhá, we have to courageously utilise the power of ikhtiyár in removing them.

In essence, this is Tasawwuf. So, has Tasawwuf been made easy or difficult?

This Kashmírí does not understand. His name is Bashír. He is travelling around taking note of the dunyá. And I, with the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of my Sheikh, am conveying good news. He has stayed here four days and has become sáleh (pious) and also become muslih (one making the isláh of others). Whereas, staying four years over there he never became sáleh. How can he become a muslih?

And this person's name is Fahím. He would have great understanding of my comments. He has very good understanding: "Fahím" is derived from

the root word "fahm". "Fahím" is the superlative. So, why should he not understand? He has stayed here four years but he has not become sáleh. What chance of him becoming a muslih?

[It is important to understand Hadhratjí's رحمة الله عليه *special technique here. Firstly, there is a play on words: "Bashír" means "one who brings good news." "Fahm" means "understanding". "Fahím" means "one with great or deep understanding". Secondly, it appears as if is publicly criticising Fahím and embarrassing him. In actual fact, this is a technique Hadhratjí*رحمة الله عليه *used occasionally to jolt a person. It happens that an obstacle arises in the person's progress in Sulúk, causing him to falter or stagnate. Alhamdulilláh, many of us who have experienced this technique that Hadhratjí* رحمة الله عليه *employed on us can vouchsafe that this approach removes the obstacle in our path and that progress in Sulúk is much faster thereafter. –Tr.]*

What was it that I said? With taufíqe-Iláhí, fadhle-Iláhí and the barkat of Hadhratwálá, that in four days Bashír became sáleh and also muslih.

Conditions for a chillah to be of benefit

These poor people have developed a passion to go for a chillah. Fine. A chillah is acceptable in that a chillah has been mentioned in the Hadíth Sharíf. There is barkat in it. But when?

When there is ikhlás: Besides the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá (ridhá-e-Iláhí) there is no other intention. In essence, the concern in the heart is for the ákhirat; there is awe and respect (azmat) for Alláh Ta'álá, with muhabbat. A chillah has been mentioned in the Hadíth Sharíf, so complete forty days. Fine, the objective has been attained, with taufíqe-Iláhí: he has become sáleh and he has also become muslih. Having become a pír he sets out. But when? When he has planted his feet firmly on the path.

This is the manner in which I speak. Old age has set in. Whilst able to do so my heart desires that I pass by conveying some nasíhat and wasíyet to my friends. We are definitely going to pass on. Some principles should be instilled in the minds.

Principles will be of definite benefit. How long will you remember the branches of masá'il? How long are you going to take to rectify the offshoots, each, each branch and each, each quality? Grab hold of the principles and all the nafsání branches will be remedied. There are numerous masá'il.

Here is a principle.

Arè! Very well – one chillah is fine but it will not be of use any old how. One has to stay the way that I explain. One chillah will be sufficient, inshá-Alláh Ta'álá. How? Just to bring through the left to the right. We will depict the left as evil; the right as goodness. The nafs forebodes evil. On the right is the rúh.

[Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه is referring to the Latífahe-rúh which is situated just below the right nipple. The Latífahe-nafs is situated below the navel. The Latífahe-qalb is situated below the left nipple. -Tr.]

Make taubah that you can come from through the left to the right. What else do you have to do? Let me give you an illustration: It is hot and you want to sleep in the open air. You wish to enjoy the cool breeze. However, the chárpáí is inside the room. So, you need to bring the chárpáí from inside into the open and, afterwards, from the open take it inside again. Now, will you have to carry it or not? Or drag it? Fine, even if you have to drag it. But still, when bringing it from inside to the outside you still need to carry it or drag it.

Method of making the zikr of "Lá-iláha-illalláh"

Similarly, bring forth the "Lá" of "Lá-iláha" from below towards the left chest, towards the heart, causing the "Lá" to cut off the evil of the nafs, and then drag "iláha" over to this side to the right, towards the rúh. Then, emphatically say "há". While saying "há" throw away all ghairulláh. Where do you throw away ghairulláh? Throw it away behind your back. Have you done so or not yet?

Then recite "illalláhu". In this way Alláh has entered into the heart.

What do you understand? It is that the creation has been removed and the Creator has entered – the Sáhibe-Jalál and Sáhibe-Jamál, with His Jalál and Jamál.

This is the method of making the zikr of "Lá-iláha-illalláh". If done in this way then enjoy the delight of it. Until there is not a little jehr (loudness) and a little dharb (thumping) what zikr is it? Yes, it will be a tasbíh for connecting with Alláh Ta'álá. However, the effect of "tayyib" (goodness) that is in the Kalimah Tayyibah will not manifest until it is not done in

this way.

This is a Kalimah Táhirah and also a Kalimah Tayyibah. As a tasbíh there will be táhirah (purification) but the tayyib will manifest only when it is done in the manner explained above.

"Tayyib" means "delightful/ delicious". That is why it has been named Kalimah Tayyibah and not Kalimah Táhirah. The Kalimah is táhirah initially and tayyib afterwards. Purity comes first; delight comes afterwards.

Arè children! Why are you vexing me in my old age? This is a time for sabr. You come and just plant yourselves here just like that. Some have come from England and sat down. Some have come from Africa and sat down. Some have come from Kashmir and sat down. And, of course, there are the local children as well.

[This is not to be taken literally. Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه *enjoyed inter-acting with the young students. The above statements were made in a teasing, loving and affectionate manner. -Tr.]*

Listen! When "Lá-iláha" is recited you have become táhir. When "illalláhu" is recited you have now become tayyib. Why is it so? The reason is that when "Lá-iláha" is recited the creation has been removed. When "illalláhu" is recited, the Creator has appeared. When the creation has been removed, you have become táhir. When the Creator has appeared you have become tayyib. So, in the zikr of "Lá-iláha-illalláh" is the means of becoming táhir and also becoming tayyib.

May Alláh Ta'álá make it that I understand this and that you also understand.

Contaminating effects of association (ikhtilát)

However, it is necessary to understand this principle as well: Save yourself from association with others (ikhtilát). Intermingling is not good.

Just see: when preparing food the gravy is excellent but let a drop of urine fall in it and it becomes impure (ná-pák). It has all been wasted. Another example: Some grittiness has contaminated the savoury. The hand-mill for grinding the spices was not washed properly so that some sand got mixed up with the spices. These spices were then used as ingredients for the kebab. When the kebab was placed in the mouth it was all gritty with

sand. So, the savoury was looking appetising and the aroma was mouth-watering but it was not pleasant to the taste.

Qissah: The taste of rawness in the tea of Mauláná Gangohí رحمة الله عليه.

Hadhrat Mauláná Habíbur-Rahmán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was the special attendant (khádime-khás) of Hadhrat Mauláná Rashíd Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه . (Hadhrat Mauláná Habíbur-Rahmán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه later became the principal at Dárul-'Ulúm Deoband.). In any case, it was his duty to make the tea.

Hadhratwálá related to us an incident that once took place. Hadhrat Mauláná Habíbur-Rahmán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه had made some tea and served it to Mauláná Gangohí رحمة الله عليه who commented: "I taste some rawness in this tea." When he made tea and served it the following day Mauláná Gangohí رحمة الله عليه said: "There is no rawness today."

Mauláná Habíbur-Rahmán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه started pondering on why the tea was fine that day and not the previous day. "I had done everything exactly the same on both days: the tea pot, the milk pot, the cup and the strainer were washed exactly the same on both days. What was the difference today?" After some deep thought it suddenly struck him. "Oho! Yesterday, after washing the utensils I merely shook off the dripping water. Today I wiped the utensils dry with a dishcloth! There was no moisture today. Yesterday there was some moisture remaining on the utensils! That is why he commented that there was no rawness in the tea today!"

This was the degree of sensitivity of Mauláná Gangohí'sرحمة الله عليه temperament that he could perceive even that degree of moisture.

So, you can see that the effect of the sand was grittiness and the effect of the water was rawness. These are the effects of ikhtilát.

In the same manner, by sitting with others, by intermingling with others the effect will be that the eyes will also be corrupted and the ears will also be corrupted and the tongue will also be used freely.

Why is this? The reason is that what was acquired, by the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá, when he stayed with his sheikh, is now being diluted by intermingling with others when he reaches his hometown. He was not so firmly dyed in his colours that he is not affected by others.

Janáb, do you understand? This is the effect of intermingling. When you started interacting with these others, minute by minute the state of being táhir and tayyib in your consideration and regard starts evaporating. That person who left with wisdom, in a short while has become inconsiderate.

One method for avoiding ikhtilát

Many letters come to me. Some poor mudarrisín write: "I had developed within myself a love for seclusion. However, other mudarrisín come to sit here and they vex me. They just blab about this and that. What should I do?"

I wrote to him: "Sit with a kitáb nearby. When they start to discuss this and that, then you say: 'Oho! I was reading this kitáb and I came across a very remarkable article.' You then read out from the kitáb. Those who show an interest will sit and listen. Others will say: 'Please excuse us. We will be back in a while. Inshá-Alláh Ta'álá, we will be back.'

"Using this tactic, they will go and will not return in future. Should they return, repeat this process. When they see this two or three times then it will not be necessary to say anything anymore." This is on condition that there is genuine love for seclusion, as there should be:

حُبِّبَ اِلَيَّ الْخَلَاءُ

Solitude has been made dear to me.

One of the first things taught in Bukhárí Sharíf is that, when Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم came to love seclusion and his heart became attuned by this seclusion then by means of wahí, divine 'ilm was revealed to him.

In actual fact, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم was blessed with nabúwat approximately three thousand years before Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام, who was created only afterwards. Whatever was to take place in this realm for the future arrival of this great personality was already prepared in the most perfect manner. Then only was the nabúwat and risálat revealed in this realm.

However, until such a time that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم did not perform 'ibádat in seclusion and he did come to love seclusion, that divine 'ilm was not revealed to him by means of wahí.

As for us tulebá’ and ahle-’ilm, we desire that wahí should descend on to us in the form of some spiritual experience, in the form of kashf, in the form of intuition and in the form of ilhám, without having developed love for seclusion. There is a Fársí saying:

This is just a (whimsical) thought; an absurdity; (pure) insanity.

This thinking is like “khiyálí-puláo” (i.e. a pie in the sky). Why this madness? When ’ilm was not revealed to the Nabí, in consideration of whom the universe – the heavens and the earth – was created, without him having developed a love of seclusion, will it be revealed to us? No. Never! Yes, some words and impressions will be acquired in the form of information but ’ilm will not be acquired.

Have you understood the point?

So, ’ilm is necessary. There is no way forward without ’ilm. The story of Hadhrat Abdul Quddús Gangohí رحمة الله عليه has been related many times: he presented himself to Sheikh Abdul-Haqq Radúlwí رحمة الله عليه in order to follow the path of Sulúk. He mentioned his condition and said that he had come for his isláh. He was asked: “Have you acquired ’ilme-Dín?” He answered: “No. Not really.” The sheikh said: “Go to Delhi. First go and acquire ’ilme-Dín. Without ’ilme-Dín there is a danger of going astray.”

In that age the repository of ’ilme-Dín was in the family of Sháh Walí-ulláh.

As Hadhrat Abdul Quddús Gangohí رحمة الله عليه stood up to depart Sheikh Abdul-Haqq رحمة الله عليه said: “Listen carefully. It seems that when you return after having studied, I will not be still alive. Be as it may. My son will be alive. You become bai’at to him. Turn to him for your isláh and keep on coming to my mazár. Inshá-Alláh Ta’álá, you will derive the same amount of faidh (blessings) as you would have were I to be alive.”

Having proper faith and confidence in a sheikh

Before, people had tremendous faith and confidence. They were very firm. Hadhrat Abdul Quddús Gangohí رحمة الله عليه said: “Very well.” He proceeded to Delhi.

When he returned after completing his studies the situation was as the sheikh had stated. The sheikh had passed away. As he had been instructed,

he became bai'at to his son. This is called "nibháhná" – to be faithful in maintaining a relationship.

Nowadays, the situation is amazing, as demonstrated by the qissah concerning Hadhratwálá: One person from the rural area came and requested to become bai'at. Just by chance Hadhratwálá asked him: "You perhaps do not own some mowrúthí land?"

Mowrúthí land was land that was inherited, but not in accordance with the Sharí'at.

He said: "Hadhrat, I do." Hadhratwálá told him: "First relinquish the land and then you come back. I will then make you bai'at." This person replied: "Hadhrat, make me bai'at and then I will relinquish it." Hadhratwálá said: "No, brother. First you relinquish the land then I will make you bai'at." This person departed and became bai'at somewhere else.

This is the type of affection these days – "scratch the head and eat the brains!"

However, Hadhrat Abdul Quddús Gangohí رحمة الله عليه did not have such flimsy i'tiqád. He became bai'at to the sheikh's son and regularly visited the mazár of the sheikh. Thereafter, who did he become? What rank did he achieve? Alláhu-Akbar! What can one say? He became an amazing and astonishing Alláh-wálá!

To continue: It is necessary to acquire 'ilm. 'Ilm may be acquired through an Arabic syllabus or a Fársí syllabus or a syllabus in Urdú prepared by reliable and authentic scholars. Or 'ilm could be acquired without studying from kitábs but by following a "syllabus" of listening and continuously asking questions. Acquiring 'ilm is not dependent on kitábs. The material in kitábs may also be found by listening to somebody and asking questions regularly. A person can become an 'álim by this method of continuous asking.

Were there not such great, lofty and noble auliyá-Alláh in the past who did not study the Arabic syllabus and then renowned scholars went and became bai'at to them? So, why did these 'ulemá became bai'at to them? They were not 'álim as such. Arè! They were such that even the 'álim appeared like non-'álims in front of them! They were "'álim-garr" – they made 'álims into an 'álim, with the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá.

The status of an ’álim is very elevated

The status of an ’álim is very elevated. This I mentioned yesterday that an ’álim enjoys a very high rank. However, the ’álim, by the demands of his ’ilm, has to be a practising ’álim – an ’álim-bá-amal. Then his rank is very high.

If, by his being involved in some sin, some ’álim is sent into Jahannam, and an ignorant (jáhil) mu’min is also sent into Jahannam, and both are afterwards taken out by virtue of their ímán, the rank of the ’álim in Jannat will be very higher in comparison with that of the jáhil mu’min. The reason is that the ’álim has in him the rank of ’ilm also. Where has the jáhil any status as far as ’ilm is concerned? So, if an ’álim is sent into Jahannam due to some weakness in his actions, when he is taken out his rank will be very much higher than that of a jáhil.

Yesterday I mentioned that an ’álim and a jáhil are not equal. How can an ’álim and a jáhil be equal? Neither are they equal in this world nor in the ákhirat. An ’álim will be superior here as well as over there. Alláh Ta’álá has stated:

هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الَّذِيْنَ يَعْلَمُوْنَ وَالَّذِيْنَ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ ۗ إِنَّمَا يَتَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ۝

Are those who possess ’ilm equal to those who do not know? But only men of understanding will pay heed. (S.39.9.)

Just see: Alláh Ta’álá is saying that the difference between an ’álim and a jáhil will be recognised by those with proper intellect (’aqle-salím). What does the jáhil know? It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf:

فَضْلُ الْعَالِمِ عَلٰى الْعَابِدِ كَفَضْلِيْ عَلٰى اَدْنٰكُمْ

The excellence of an ’álim over an ’ábed is like my excellence over the lowest of you

Thus, the excellence of an ’álim is very great.

You look at the molvísáhib doing something wrong but you do not look at the wrongs you are doing. Yet, you are a jáhil. He knows that the wrong he is doing is contrary to the orders of Alláh Ta’álá, whereas you do not

even know this. So, how are you going to make taubah? On the other hand, he is remorseful and he will make taubah as well. He realises that he is ill and he will seek a remedy. You, on the other hand, are ill but you do not realise that you are ill. How will you seek a remedy?

In any case an ’álim is full of excellence. Even if he commits a sin, he will consider it to be a sin. The jáhil will not consider a sin to be a sin and he will be persistent in sinning. The ’álim will be repentant and make taubah. It comes in the Hadíth Sharíf:

اَلتَّا ئِبُ مِنَ الذَّنْبِ كَمَنْ لَا ذَنْبَ لَهٗ

One who makes taubah from his sin is like one who has not sinned at all.

Thus, in the first instance, it will be very difficult for an ’álim to land himself in Jahannam. If, for argument’s sake, he does get sent to Jahannam, he will attain a very high stage when released from Jahannam.

The ’álim should recognise himself

So, O you ’ulemá! Know yourselves! If you do not know yourselves how will the creation in this world know you? First recognise who you are. The tálibe-’ilme-Dín have left off recognising themselves. If you were to have recognised yourselves, others would have recognised you merely by looking at you.

Ají! Remember that until the singer does not love his own singing the listeners will also not love his singing. It is a famous saying that if the dancer does not love her coquettish strutting, how will others love it? This illustration is quite famous.

Do you understand molvísáhib? Just coming to sit here!

Some etiquettes of sitting in a majlis

Ají! One should sit in the majálise-isláh. To sit therein is fine provided that there is i’timáde-kámil and i’tiqáde-jázim (complete faith and confidence) on the speaker. Then go and sit. Otherwise one should not sit because of the danger of worsening of his condition. The reason is that he will not understand many of the statements. One does not know what corruption will set in and what misconceptions he may develop.

One should have full and complete faith and confidence in the speaker and then come and attend. Otherwise one should not attend. If this precondition is not there then, instead of becoming embellished one will deteriorate.

That is why I also ask some persons whether they intend sitting through the whole majlis or will they leave halfway through? If a person says that he will depart halfway through then I tell him: "Go now. It is not permissible for you to attend. Until a person does not intend to sit through the whole majlis it is not já'iz to attend."

Bádsháh 'Álamgír رحمة الله عليه had the above announced. The reason for this announcement was as follows: One person heard half a lecture and stood up and departed. He had heard only part of the topic and he gave wrong information to the people based on what he had heard. In actual fact the topic was fully discussed later on and this he did not hear. This is why he made incorrect statements.

When Bádsháh 'Álamgír رحمة الله عليه got to hear of this, being the ruling king, he made the announcement that only that person should sit in a lecture who sits right through till the end, otherwise not.

This qissah was related to us by Hadhratwálá.

Ají! What should one relate? This is no longer the age in which to relate things.

I was addressing the 'ulemá and said that we have discarded out station. That is why the general public have an opportunity for criticism.

Mas'alah of standing behind the imám and equal saffs

What is the mas'alah, muftísáhib? It is that the person standing behind the imám should be a sáhibe-'ilm – one who possesses knowledge of Dín. Nowadays the ignorant rush forward to stand behind the imám. What can one say? Now it is the jáhil who stands behind the imám before anybody else.

Is the mas'alah not as stated above? Of course it definitely is! However, this is an age of fitnah. It is an age of weakness. Nothing can be said. Do not say anything. Yes, he is a jáhil and he will show he has a stature above that of the 'álim.

There is also the mas'alah that the saff on either side of the imám should be

of equal lengths. If it is slightly longer on the right it is of no consequence. The left side should not be longer than the right. However, in these times one cannot say anything.

Why is this? The reason is because of this incident: Hadhratwálá was making imámat. The saff on the left was a bit longer than that on the right. Hadhratwálá told someone on the left to come over to the right.

Understand that imámat is an official position. The imám should look to the right and the left. He should rectify any irregularities. That is why the imám should be an awe-inspiring person – not a "tuppenny ha'-penny" imám. This is the 'ulúm of the Sharí'at. This is the principle.

So, Hadhratwálá told this one person on the left side: "Come over to the right side." This person did not move from his spot. He did not obey the command. He was stubborn. Hadhratwálá then saw another person, an acquaintance, and told him: "This person does not want to move. You come over." This person humbly went over.

Remaining silent for fear of fitnah

Do you understand? This is an incident from the time of Hadhratwálá. Now, this age is an age of greater fitnah. Nowadays a jáhil considers himself to be superior to an 'álim. He arrives at the masjid before anybody else – this is commendable. The 'álim does not have the opportunity to be in the masjid before everybody. He is occupied with some Díní work. He is busy serving the people – khidmate-khalq.

One cannot say anything to that jáhil. It is an age of fitnah. Just try and say something and then see how you are disgraced. Therefore, keep silent. *[Readers should remember that this advice was given by Hadhratjí* رحمة الله عليه *in November 1990 on the situation then. One can imagine what the situation is now! -Tr.]*

Remember that it is also a principle of the Sharí'at that when there is even a chance of the slightest fitnah then do not say anything. Do not speak. Remain silent. Otherwise you will be humiliated.

Proper study of kitábs. The status of "Al-Hidáyah"

You have heard that there is great virtue in amr-bil-ma'rúf (enjoining what is right) and the áyet is also recited:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُوْنَ بِالْمَعْرُوْفِ وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ

You are the best community that has been raised up for mankind. You commands good conduct and forbid wrong. (S.3.110.)

Amr-bil-ma'rúf is proclaimed all over. However, work cannot be accomplished merely with one áyet. Work can only be done if all the áyát are taken together.

Similarly, work cannot be accomplished merely with one Hadíth Sharíf. All other opposing Ahádíth Sharíf have to be placed together and then work can be done.

Oh yes! It is the habit of some that if they have seen something in a kitáb they go around showing it to everybody. And if they come across something that contradicts this at some other place in the kitáb, what then? Whatever you read, try to understand what you are reading.

"Al-Hidáyah" which is studied in the Arabic Madrasah, the dárul-'ulúms, is a very amazing and astonishing kitáb. It is a kitáb of verdicts and decrees. It is a kitáb of judiciary. An Englishman used to say: "If we (the English) did not have this kitáb 'Al-Hidáyah' we would never have been able to administer the judiciary." This is the verdict of the English. This is such a kitáb.

In this age, as for us who study it and teach it, do not study it and teach it as it should be studied and taught. Yet, see what this Englishman is saying because he had studied it.

Visits to the universities in England and Cairo

When I visited England, where there are two very famous universities, very high calibre universities, world famous. I went to see both universities.
[This is a reference to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. -Tr.]

There was an Englishman with me and he carried some keys with him. He went and unlocked the doors of the rooms and showed these to me. I saw the libraries of both universities. These were big buildings, several stories high. Nothing like these exist here. All our Arabic kitábs were in these libraries. There were several copies of every kitáb.

The tafsír of Hadhratwálá's رحمة الله عليه, "Bayánal-Qur'án", was also there. The

elucidation of the "Mathnawí Sharíf", "Kalíd-Mathnawí", was also there. All the Arabic kitábs that are studied here, were all there. The names of all the kitábs were written in massive catalogues.

After having climbed two storeys I got tired. The Englishman started climbing to the third floor. I told him: "I am now tired. I am unable to climb up."

In any case, I saw both the universities. There were boarding facilities, what we call "Dárul-Iqámah". Áháhá! As for cleanliness... Do not even ask! Absolutely clean!

As for the system of administration, no visitor from outside could come in the boarding to meet somebody. A father cannot meet his son. I witnessed this with my own eyes. A doorman is present. He asks: "Who have you come to meet?" The father says. "I have come to visit my son." The doorman then goes to call the son and brings him to meet his father.

If the person is one whom it is necessary to allow into the building, the doorman will say: "Come with me." The boy will be informed. The boy will leave his room and go to a nearby smaller, empty room to sit and converse with his father. Or else he will be told to go to the veranda. Table and chairs are placed there as well. There is no question of sitting on the ground.

So, mauláná-sáhibán, even the father cannot go to his son's room in the residence and meet him there. This type of arrangements are not seen over here. This is what we saw over there.

We saw the libraries as well. We saw the students as well. We saw the doorman as well. The person entrusted with the keys was with us. Also, we had to take him with us to see the university. One could not just go in just like that. It was not like freely entering the university – not at all. There the doorman will stop you. He will enquire: "Have you a visitor's permit to enter?" If not, then one would have to go to the principal and obtain one. We knew of this system, therefore, when we went to see the university we went with the permit.

We went to Egypt as well. The famous university (of Al-Ahzar) in Egypt is situated in the capital, Cairo. Oho! It is a massive university, such that words cannot express. We also had to have permission to visit it, even though it was an Arabic institute.

We had an acquaintance there. He had gone to say that such and such person from Hindustán has arrived and he wished to see the university. Permission was given and we went inside. Classes were in progress. Our companion went into the lecture hall and requested from the lecturer: "Our sheikh is here and wishes permission to come into the lecture hall and see."

Do you see? This is proper etiquette. Important people have elevated manners.

The lecturer stopped his lecture and immediately came out to conduct me inside.

Countless students were sitting one adjacent to the other in such a manner that they could see the ustád. When I entered all the students stood up. They looked very majestic with very fine clothes. As they stood up, they happily clapped hands, as was their custom. I found this distasteful, so I turned to the ustád and said:

اَلْتَصْفِيْقُ لِلنِّسَآءِ وَالْتَكْبِيْرُ لِلرِّجَالِ

Clapping of hands is for women – takbír is for men.

The ustád related to the students what I had said. Immediately, the students took this up and shouted out: "Na'rah-takbír! Alláhu-Akbar!"

Do you see? Have you noted their cultured response? They immediately substituted the hand-clapping by the na'rah-takbír. This is called being cultured.

Lesson to be learnt: the importance of being cultured

O students of Arabic! Are these topics not worthy of being narrated? Are these issues not worthy of pondering over?

I lament that some of our Arabic students are gájar (carrots) and others are múlí (radishes)! Those over there are great people of noble families; cultured persons, having knowledge of etiquettes. Here there are gájar and múlí – what do they understand what is meant by culture?

The scenario which I have presented of the situation over there, all this is what they have adopted by studying what is with us. By doing so they have profited from the worldly aspect and we have been left empty.

If some important person were to come here and the Muhtamim-Sáhib takes him to view the madrasah we find the students coming out of their rooms to see who it is, as if some pageant is presented. Students will come out of the rooms and from the verandas and stare.

Over there it is not like that. Everybody stays put in his place. There may be no classes in progress, but the students stay in their places. Nobody comes out of his room to look.

When we went to the university in England and visited the library there were two English students, a male and female, specifically studying in a room. I went into the room in which they were studying. Although I was close to them, the one student did not even glance at me. The other briefly glanced at me and immediately turned back to his studies. He did not keep on looking at me.

Whereas here at the Arabic madrasah, students keep on staring. It appears as if some entertainer has arrived.

Have you seen western culture? Is our behaviour not something to be ashamed about, something shameful? This culture is actually from our house. They have adopted this culture by studying what is ours. We now call them cultured and we have become uncultured.

Sometimes just go and look at the rooms at our madrasas and see in what state you will find them. Whatever the type of rooms there should be some degree of cleanliness. Or should they be messy and filthy?

Just go and have a look! The bedding will also not be neat and tidy. The cushion is also not correct – it will be lying all crooked. Where the student sits, there is where he will take off his shoes, not outside the doorway but inside.

Do you understand, mauláná-sáhibán? Am I not saying anything that is incorrect? If I am saying anything that is incorrect, seeing that you are staying there, you can go and see yourself.

These are issues to be heard and, having developed some shame, adopt these practices from our own household and become such. But there is just no perception.

There are no capabilities in the art of conversing even. Over there no outsider may enter the madrasah without permission. Over here, if a person

is told not to enter – if the doorman stops him – the person will be offended and argue: "What is this nonsense about permission?" His attitude is that the madrasah belongs to him. If he has donated some money then he believes that he is the owner of the whole madrasah. And if he has given some rotí to some tálibe-'ilm then – don't ask! – he considers himself to be the master of that student and he considers that student to be his slave. Is this called being cultured?

Whereas over there, even the father cannot proceed to his son's room to meet him. He cannot enter even the university without permission.

These etiquettes are from our house. Does the Qur'án Sharíf not state the following?

يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَدْخُلُوْا بُيُوْتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوْتِكُمْ حَتّٰى تَسْتَأْنِسُوْا وَتُسَلِّمُوْا عَلٰٓى اَهْلِهَا ۚ ذٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُوْنَ ۝

O people of ímán! Do not enter houses other than your own without first seeking permission (from those inside) and greet the people (before you take permission). This is better for you that you may be heedful (and act on it). (S.24.27.)

So, this institution which is here, is a house. Thus, why have you entered the madrasah without permission? We accept that you live in this neighbourhood but why do you enter the madrasah without permission? What is the doorman there for? You should have put a request to him and he would have obtained permission from the principal and then you could have entered.

Over here the children of the neighbourhood also play. They play in the field in front of the masjid and they also come to play in the precincts. If they are stopped, the fathers come to fight.

So, what is the madrasah? It is our house. Do you understand?

Having visited the universities in Egypt and England I saw what has been explained above. Yes, truly, they are cultured people. Over here the whole neighbourhood is uncultured. Why should one invite a fight? The fathers should have scolded their children: "Why do you go to the madrasah to play? You go to play cricket there. That is a madrasah. Do you think it is

a clubhouse or bazár? Why did you go to the madrasah? If you go to the madrasah you go to study – why did you go there to play?"

This is how they should have been prohibited, but neither the father nor the mother stops them. If the madrasah officials say anything then it is inviting a fight. Everything is jumbled, misconstrued. Are these not topics to be heard?

Entering homes without permission

We find that even scholars, learned people and those who know the Qur'án Sharíf also enter homes without permission. Whereas the mas'alah is to enter houses only after permission has been granted. So much so that even the father should obtain permission before entering the house – one does not know in what state the daughters are relaxing.

Is this not the teachings of Sulúk? Has Sulúk and Sharí'at just become the recitation of tasbíhs of "Lá-iláha-illalláh" and the performance of nafl namáz? Is that all – just sit and keep on reading the tasbíh and do as you please?

First become an ádmí and then read wazífas. Yes, first become an ádmí.

Just see: Just now we mentioned that the father also should not enter the house without permission. Also, the husband should not enter the house without permission: There may be ghair-mahram ladies present, or his wife may be relaxing in such a state that she would not want him to see her in. First ask and then enter.

These are the teachings of our house. Unfortunately it is those people who have taken benefit the ta'lím of our house. I had mentioned earlier on that they possess our kitábs which they have studied, and that is how they have adopted our ta'lím. When an Englishman comes home he will first press the bell. When he receives a reply to his ringing of the bell, then only will he enter.

Qissah one: punctuality

We have witnessed with our own eyes the following during the time of the British rule in India: An Englishman wishes to meet a certain nawább or Ra'ís. A time is specified for the meeting, that he should present himself at

such and such a time. The Englishman comes to the residence. There is a clock affixed to the door. He looks at the time and sees that a few minutes still remain for the time specified. A chair is near the door. He sits on the chair. He will not even announce his arrival, never mind enter before the allotted time. When he sees that it is now the time specified, then he will ring the bell which is on the outside. When permission is granted from inside then will he enter.

This is what I observed with my own eyes. Ají! Are these not topics to relate? Listen some more!

Qissah two: adhering to the rules and regulations

I went to the main post office in Alígarh to fulfil some need. Now, some post offices are small but this one near the college was very large. I went in and did whatever work I needed to do. Just then an Englishman came there on his bicycle. He alighted from his bicycle and went to the room where stamps, envelopes and other items were sold. This room was situated near the door of the post office. The Englishman stood at the door and spoke to the clerk inside. He needed some glue. The clerk told him to come into the room.

The clerk was a Hindustání. The English were the rulers. Remember that whoever the rulers are, their children also know that they are the rulers. Those who live under the rulers also realise that they are subservient. This is an instinctive effect. So, just see – just see what happened next.

The Hindustání had told the Englishman to come in but he did not go in. He said: "What is this that is written above? It says that it is prohibited to enter." The Hindustání told him two to three times to enter but he did not.

The English are very cultured. They have good manners. This person did not consider it a disgrace to stand outside. We would consider it disgraceful and insulting. In any case, the Englishman did not go inside. He did his work from the outside, climbed on his bicycle and left.

Arè bach-cho! My dear children! Do you understand or not? I am reminding you of these forgotten topics. Having being studied, they are still forgotten. Having being heard, they are forgotten. May Alláh Ta'álá

cause this arrogance to be destroyed.

Qissah three: technology is for use and not for show

One other incident comes to mind. An Englishman was riding his bicycle. A Hindustání was coming on his bicycle from the opposite direction. He was wearing a watch on his hand. When they were close to one another the Englishman asked him: "What is the time?" The Hindustání replied: "My watch is not working." The Englishman told him: "Stop!" The Hindustání Muslim brother stopped. The Englishman got off his bicycle. The Hindustání also got off his bicycle. The Englishman went up to the Hindustání and slapped him lightly saying: "A watch is for telling the time – not for being fashionable!"

Do you understand my talk? What is the Englishman saying? Wearing a watch is not to be fashionable. It is to tell the time. If the watch was faulty, why was it not sent for repairs to the watchmaker? Why was it worn on the hand? Do you understand? The watch comes from them. They understood the purpose for which a watch is to be utilised, how it is to be utilised and when it is to be utilised. It was not working yet he was going around with it on his hand. The watch is not merely for fashion.

They have invented items for their needs. The clothes that they wear are according to their country's condition, it being a cold place. If they do not wear clothes closely wrapped around them, the cold wind would severely affect them.

Personal experiences in England

When I went to London it was winter. For me it was very cold. It was not so cold for them. It was raining and snowing. Then, too, they were moving about just like that. I wore a shawl all the time.

In the morning I came from upstairs to have breakfast downstairs. I did not have any socks on. My host said: "Kindly wear some socks." I replied: "Arè bhâí, what need is there for socks?" He said: "Hadhrat, the cold here is no ordinary cold. It travels from your soles right to your brains."

Over there I saw a special type of material covering the walls. When I went to the toilet I noticed a light grade of carpet spread on the floor. That

is right. A carpet was spread on the floor of the toilet! It was not a high quality one but, nevertheless, it was a carpet.

I asked: "A carpet in the toilet even?" My host replied: "Yes. The cold over here is very severe. One cannot place one's feet on the ground. One has to wear shoes and step on the carpet in order to reach the footrest."

I had the impression that the carpet was placed there as a fashionable item, for show and decor, only to discover that, no, it was placed there out of necessity for health reasons.

The entertainer beats the drum and the monkey dances on cue!

We have seen them and we have adopted their ways for reasons of fashion. They do not do these things for the sake of fashion. Their clothing is also out of necessity for the conditions over there.

But we have commenced imitating them from the aspect of fashion. Have a look now. How is the Hindustání wearing the pants over here? Ohoho! Fitting tight around the thighs. Is the portion below thick or thin? Just to look also causes one to feel bad. If it is beautiful then looking at it causes the emotions to stir, especially in this age.

Those people have not worn them out of being fashionable. We have imitated them. Just see what the Englishman said, that the watch is worn not for being fashionable but for some need. If it is not working then why wear it? In the same way the English are saying: "The Hindustání is a fool! Whereas we wear our type of clothes to serve our needs, the Hindustání has imitated our styles for the sake of being fashionable. The Hindustání is very stupid. He has no intelligence."

The Englishman has beaten the drum for his monkey and the monkey has started to dance on cue – the Hindustání is dancing by imitating them for the sake of being fashionable.

Also, over here, in order to please another government that was established, our youth are going around with bare heads. Their "kurtah" has also been adopted and the Musalmání kurtah has also disappeared, just as the topí has disappeared.

It must not happen – Alláh Ta'álá forbid! – that they start walking around bare-feet. The reason for saying this is that I have travelled to different

cities in this country and I also visited Madras. The attire there is different. Even the superintendent of police walks around bare-footed. This I have seen in Madras. This is the lifestyle over there. Similarly, many of the rural village people also walk around with bare feet. I wonder that thorns do not prick them. Women also walk bare feet. I do not know whether the cold affects them or not. So, in Madras even notable people walk around bare-feet.

I have also seen the people of Madras eating. I was in a coach in a train when this person started eating some rice using a thin stick instead of his fingers. I do not know how he managed that. We eat rice using five fingers.

So, in each place the eating is different and the dressing is different. Why is there this imitation? This Hindustání attire is an imitation of others' attire. And when a Hindustání Muslim adopts the dressing of others is he not a "baihrúpyá"?

[A "baihrúpyá" is a mimic street-entertainer who disguises himself in such a way as to impersonate somebody else. He then goes around the village in this impersonation and is rewarded if he manages to fool the people. -Tr.]

He sometimes wears the clothes of the Hindus and he sometimes wears the clothes of the English and sometimes somebody else's. So, is he a "baihrúpyá" or not?

Men go about without a topí. If they come here I definitely reprimand them. I say: "Where has your topí disappeared?" If there is a child with the adult then I say: "Do you not have a topí? Oho! A crow must have flown away with the child's topí! Arè! This elder was with – the crow also had a go at him and the crow took away his topí also! Oho! What a crow it must have been!"

This is the manner in which I tell them. I tell everybody, even if it is somebody coming here by car.

[Meaning some wealthy or prominent person. -Tr.]

If the lungí or pants are a bit long and the ankles are covered, I say: "Oho! Brother, just see! The lungí, or pants, is falling below the heels – do not trip on it, do not let it become soiled."

This is the manner in which I address them. I do not speak tactlessly,

which is contrary to good manners.

There was no sign of the "shalwár" over here. When the people from Punjáb started coming here then the custom of wearing the shalwár commenced. Even the womenfolk started wearing the shalwár.

[Shalwár (salwar) – A pair of loose-fitting pleated trousers tapering to the ankle, worn by women from northern India and Pakistan, especially in the Punjab region, usually under a long tunic kamíz.-Tr.]

The strict observance of purdah previously

Previously, over here the purdah was observed at its highest level. Among the noble Hindustání Muslim families purdah was at its quintessence. Let me give you an example.

Just behind us is the house of Achí-Bí. Directly in front is our house. When my family – when she was alive – wanted to visit Achí-Bí, a dolí was summoned. This was an age when this type of transport was used.

[Dolí, also called a sedan chair, palanquin, litter or pálkí: a chair concealed by surrounding curtains, attached to poles which are lifted by porters to transport the passenger. -Tr.]

It was placed in the house and she would then sit on the chair. The curtains would be closed and the porters would take the dolí and place in Achí-Bí's house. Only after the porters had moved away would she alight from it.

Nowadays there is no trace of the dolí. Women now go around on foot. The government is different now. It is a new age. Let me mention an incident from the past so that you may have a better understanding.

My esteemed father رحمة الله عليه had six or seven children who passed away almost immediately after birth. When I was born I survived a few days. So, there was hope that I would live. My paternal aunt رحمة الله عليها, my father's younger sister, who was married somewhere else , had come.

In those days the rain used to pour down in torrents. We do not see this nowadays. Neither is the heat like before nor the rains. Severe winds used to blow.

To continue: There had been a very heavy downpour of rain. Water was flooding all over. Some light drizzle was still seen. My aunt said: "I will take the child to my place." Her house was at a distance of six to seven

leagues.

[A league was a variable distance of approximately five kilometres.-Tr.]

My father رحمة الله عليه was the older brother. She was the younger sister. He told her: "It has rained very heavily and it is still raining. It will be very difficult to take him in these conditions." She was adamant: "I will take him this very day!" Female obstinacy is well known.

The situation was difficult. My father رحمة الله عليه tried again. "It will be very difficult for the porters of the dolí to travel." She repeated very firmly: "I will take him this very day!"

My father رحمة الله عليه was helpless. He summoned the porters.

They came and asked: "Sir, what are your instructions?" My father replied: "What can I say? My sister wishes to take the child and we require a dolí. Will you take them?" The porters said: "Look, it has rained and the roads are in a terrible condition. It is still drizzling over here."

Obviously, I did not witness all this personally – it was related to me by the house people much later.

My father رحمة الله عليه relayed to my aunt what the porters had to say. She responded: "I will go today! Bring the dolí!" She was a Khán-Sáhibáh!

The poor porters were forced to bring the dolí. My aunt placed me in it and off we went. As mentioned, the distance was about six to seven leagues.

There is no sign of the dolí nowadays. This was the custom in those days – to summon the dolí. We have seen another era. These are now times of decline. We now have to take into consideration the decline and walk along. We have to go along making a little sabr and some shukr. Ask me!

What I described above was a matter of civil administration. It was not oppression. One does not call it harshness.

The misconception of equal wealth for everybody

Alláh Ta'álá states:

وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ

And if Alláh were to increase the provision for His bondsmen they would be sure to rebel on the earth. (S.42.27.)

Haqq Ta'álá is saying that should He give equal wealth to all the people

in the world? This cannot be so. Why? The reason is that if this was done, no one person will feel obligated to another. This is because everybody would be equal. And when no one is obligated to another, the system in the whole world will be chaotic. It is maladministration that everybody should be given equal wealth and that everybody should be kept in an equal condition.

Do you understand?

To find a worker or an artisan has become difficult nowadays. They will say: "First we have to do this here. First I have to plough the land here. Then we will come to your place." Systems have become corrupted.

Nowadays the child confronts and opposes the father. Is this not happening? When he wants to he swears the father. The son is a lowly person that he hurls abuse at the father. He does not listen to the father. Just sit and keep on trying to make him understand.

The cultured manners of the nobility

Nowadays even the children of the nobility have not remained as we have witnessed during the age of nobility. I will relate an incident when I was sitting with a Ra'ís, a nobleman. Dear brothers, I did not spend my life sitting with women!

Anyhow, this qissah took place in Ditowlí. The biggest principality in those days was that of Ditowlí. The nawább of that place was Nawáb Faidh-Muhammad Khán-sáhib. He had six sons and one daughter.

Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه used to say that Hají Imdádulláh رحمة الله عليه – our Dádá-Pír – said that if you wanted to see a walí among the nawábs then you should go and see Nawáb Faidh-Muhammad Khán-sáhib.

To continue: I was sitting with Nawáb-sáhib's son, Isá Khán-sáhib. I was still young. My beard had just started sprouting and was still small. I had gone for some reason or other. I will describe the etiquettes to you.

When I had arrived I announced my arrival. He had a butler who gave me permission to enter. I entered to where he was sitting. Although he had children and grandchildren, the moment I came he stood up for me. This was the culture with us. I was still small. His son was very much older than me.

Nevertheless, he stood up when he saw me enter. He told me to sit. He then rang the bell. His son came from inside the house but there was a delay in his coming. The son gave the royal salám which involves bowing slightly.

It is a different matter that this type of salám is ná-já'iz. I am only describing the manner in which the Khansahibs used to greet.

In any case, the son greeted with the royal salám. Khán-sáhib gave a very soft reply and looked at his son with a frown. The son started trembling. Khán-sáhib remained silent. After letting his son stand this way for some time, he asked: "Why were you delayed?" The son became visibly terrified. Khán-sáhib then said: "Go!" The son left.

I have witnessed this spectacle with my own eyes. I have seen such an age. However, such an approach cannot be applied nowadays. One cannot do it nowadays. It is an era of decline. It is an era of weakness and decay.

Listen some more: Once, I was late in coming home. I had gone with some older boys to play "kabbaddí"

[A game where members of one team chase those of the opposite team, trying to touch a member of the opposing team. -Tr.]

I performed Ishá namáz with the older boys. There was not a single child of any Khán-sáhib who did not perform all the namáz. Similarly, the womenfolk were also such that they performed all their namáz.

I came home from the masjid. Now I felt myself trembling. The door-chain was open. I opened the door and went inside, closing the door and putting on the chain. My father رحمة الله عليه was extremely displeased. He was furious. He asked: "Why are you late?" I replied: "Some big boys went to play kabbaddí and I also went with them. That is the reason for my being late." He asked: "You performed your namáz?" I replied: " Jí, I have performed my namáz." He said: "This time you are forgiven. It should not happen again in future." I said: "Very well." I was devastated!

And nowadays? It is the son who causes the father to tremble!

So, that person who has experienced that golden age, how must he be living in this age? Do not ask!

At times it is best to remain silent

Jí-há. Now do you understand that this is an age of decline? I am showing you the clash between that era and this era. Before this I showed you the clash of the universities in England and Egypt. I also showed you the situation with regard to the order that the ahle-'ilm should stand behind the imám. However, the jáhil stands there now. I am demonstrating the clashes. This era is like that. The big should adopt a low profile. Do not speak otherwise you will be disgraced. Thus, silence!

It has also become very difficult to explain mas'alas on every occasion. The Sharí'at says that we should look at the times, O 'ulemá! Yes, do not speak on all occasions. Where it is stated:

مَنْ رَاٰى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَرًا فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهٖ فَاِنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهٖ

Whoever sees any wrong should rectify it with his hand (physically). If he is unable to do so (rectify it) then with his tongue (verbally).

There it is also stated:

فَاِنْ لَّمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهٖ

And if he is unable to do so, then with his heart (mentally).

The meaning of this is: Keep silent. Do not speak. You will be disgraced. It should not be that you discuss controversial mas'alas all over the place. Explain mas'alas. However it is not the task of the ahle-'ilm, the 'ulemá that they discuss controversial mas'alas on every occasion.

O 'ulemá-kirám! Do you understand? First measure the person you are addressing: What are his qualities? Who is he? What is his temperament like, his attitude? Yes. Will he not speak indecently? Will he not be abusive? And so forth.

Tahzíb – to be cultured

I have related the qissah of the Khán-sáhib in order to show you what it is to be cultured; what is etiquette and respect between seniors and juniors; what is the effect of 'ilm. Culture is something else from what we understand it to be.

There is a saying in Arabic: "Hazzabash-shajarah –He has pruned the tree." There are orchards belonging to ordinary people and there are orchards

belonging to the nobility and nawábs. The worker in the nawáb's garden is called a málí. He will prune the tree in such a way, cutting off the branches at the bottom and trimming the branches above, that one feels that one can spread a chárpáí on it and lie down. This is the grammatical meaning of the Arabic word "hazzab". In other words, to trim the branches so that they are level.

This is referred to as "tahzíb" – to be cultured – taken from the root of the Arabic word "hazzab". Those who are horticulturists know that even flowers can be cultured. So, this tahzíb is not only for humans but also for trees and even for flowers.

Shall I say more? This tahzíb is for dogs as well. Those dogs that are kept by the higher nobility, by the nawábs and the English for the purpose of hunting, are also taught tahzíb.

In Mishkát Sharíf "Kitábus-Sayyid" is taught. In this chapter Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has shown the method of training dogs.

What do these poor people sitting know? They think that only namáz and rozah are taught in the Arabic madáris. That is all that they teach. Foolish, unacquainted ones! What do they know?

[Bawlah janglí kabútar is the actual phrase that Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه, used on occasions when addressing his young students. It was used affectionately, teasingly, similar to the phrase: "You little monkey!" that a father will address his little child with.-Tr.]

The holistic teachings in the madáris

A little while ago I had mentioned that an Englishman said: "If we did not have 'Al-Hidáyah' we would not have been able to run a judiciary." "Al-Hidáyah" is taught over here. What do Muslims think? They have this idea that only namáz, rozah, zakát, hajj and so forth are taught here and nothing else. Remember! Whatever is being taught in the colleges is taught here.

I had mentioned a little while back that I visited the university in Cairo. A lecturer was giving a lesson. As I entered the students clapped according to their custom. I said: "Clapping of hands is for women – takbír is for men."

The professor explained to me the subject on which he was lecturing. I said that all of that was also taught over here. I did not remain silent over

there. Alhamdulilláh, with the fadhl of Haqq-Ta'álá, with the barkat of my asátizah and the faidh of Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه I did not remain silent.

At that time the professor was lecturing on the topic of agriculture. I explained that this subject was also taught by us and with great detail. The professor turned to the class and told them exactly what I had said. I also added: "Do not think it is only at your university that this is taught and taught in this manner?"

Are these not matters to be listened to? Or should I just keep on teaching you how to just sit and make zikrulláh in abundance? These are topics that are to be discussed even more in this age so that the reality of the Arabic madáris is present in front of you. The 'ilm here is by means of wahí-qat'í so that you may value it in your minds. You yourselves have shown ingratitude for your 'ilm and have sought prestige from the creation. You yourselves are involved in activities causing dishonour so how can the question of honour ever arise?

Do you understand the points made? Jí! Know yourselves!

I have related to you some of my travels very briefly. I have seen many parts of the world. I have been to America. I have been to England. I have been to South Africa. Did I observe these places with furtive eyes or how did I view these places? I did not go for leisure and pleasure. When I was called by you I went. And, when I went, I saw these places with the view of taking lessons. These lessons I am presenting to you.

I have related the culture of these places to you. I have seen carpets laid down in the toilets. This I have also mentioned to you. All this started off on the topic of the watch. The Englishman had said that the watch is worn out of necessity and this person was wearing it to be fashionable. He had alighted from his bicycle and had gone to slap this person. "When the watch is not working why are you wearing it on your hand? If the watch is not working why did you not give it to the watchmaker to be repaired?"

These topics came up as asides. I presented the situation of the English students in the university in England – the manner in which they lived and the cleanliness of their living quarters. No stranger was allowed to enter the rooms without permission and could not crash through the gates into the precincts.

Here youngsters just enter the madrasah precincts and even play inside. If one prohibits them they get annoyed and confront one.

Over there one needed to obtain a permit to enter. One needed to get permission from the principal. Then only was one allowed to enter. Over there even the father of a student cannot meet his son without permission. He is not allowed to go into his room. Over here, whoever wishes to just enters.

I showed that all what they practise is from our house – hamárí ghar kí báte.

Etiquettes of entering a house and a madrasah

Our teaching is that one cannot enter even one's own house without permission. Some people just clear their throats when entering. This is not correct. You cannot enter. What does Alláh Ta'álá state?

فَإِذَا دَخَلْتُمْ بُيُوْتًا فَسَلِّمُوْا عَلٰٓى أَنْفُسِكُمْ تَحِيَّةً مِّنْ عِنْدِ اللهِ مُبٰرَكَةً طَيِّبَةً ؕ

When you are about to enter your homes then make salám which is a form of du'á and which has been specified from Alláh Ta'álá and is something of high blessings. (S.24.61.)

When my Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه used to go home he used to carry a cane in his right hand. When he reached the door he used to knock three times with the cane. He then said "Assalámo-alaikum". If a child inside the house said: "Come in," heouse where purdah is observed.

Sadly, purdah has disappeared. Is purdah not to be observed from first cousins, both on the maternal and paternal sides, and from close relatives? With whomsoever one can make nikáh purdah has to be observed. But, just see! He just barges into the house and goes to sit there, next to them. What corrupt social etiquettes are these?

In the same manner the madrasah institute is within four walls. What was the necessity for the four surrounding walls? Also, why was there the necessity for the four walls to be very high? Are there women staying inside?

So, just as a house is a residence, the madrasah institute is also a house. So, there is no question of an outsider entering the madrasah without

permission. If anybody wants to meet his son or meet a relative then first take permission from the principal. If the principal is not present his deputy will be present. Tell the doorman: “Inform the principal that I wish to meet a certain person.”

What happens now is that the children play within the precincts of the madrasah If one prohibits them they feel upset.

Also, when the father comes he asks: “Where does the boy, whose name is so-and-so, reside?” Somebody points out the room he is staying in. The father immediately goes directly to the room and barges in. He is completely unconcerned as to the state of the child. How is he sitting? How is he lying down? What is he engaged in? Unconcerned, he simply barges in as if he is entering his own room.

What type of culture is this? What type of consideration and manners are these? Are these not topics to be discussed? Is it not necessary for those in the madrasah to listen to them? Should the responsible persons in the madrasah not take note?

We have seen another age. Nowadays just keep silent. It is an age of decline, an age of decay. Do not say anything, otherwise you will invite a fight.

Cleanliness and tidiness is our teaching

To continue: The English took worldly benefit by studying our kitábs. They acquired cultural benefit. We are well aware of the condition of London and other parts of England before the coming of Islám. We know. We have studied the books of history. They were like animals . Where was there any insániyet (humanity)? It is through the study of our kitábs that they are what they are now.

Whereas we have retrogressed, even after having studied. They have acquired culture after studying; and we do not acquire any culture even after having studied. Just go and see the state of cleanliness of the rooms. The responsible persons do not bother to inspect the rooms to see the condition they are in. What is the state of the bedding and the cushions? What is the state of the chárpáí? Where are the shoes lying?

Where will they go and check? Even if they go and check today and the

students have listened and obeyed, it is with great difficulty that the rooms will remain orderly for two to three days. After that the situation will revert to its disorderly state. The hue of the students' temperaments are of a different type, that of being uncultured. That is how they will live.

So, who will go day after day to tell them until some manners are not instilled in them? Having told them once and then twice, then leave them to live in that manner.

This topic is for the boys to listen to and also the responsible people of the madrasah.

Ají! Today the majlis is amazing! Is this not a majlis? Are these not issues to be related? Are these matters not to be understood? Is this not a culture to be imbibed? What type of culture should the students of Arabic acquire? Listening about the culture of others how cultured should they become?

Qissah of the Muslim Englishman coming to India

Otherwise it will happen as Hadhratwálá رحمة الله عليه once related to us: An Englishman from a noble family became a Muslim. He felt a desire to come to Hindustán. He arrived over here and associated with some of the nawábs and other noblemen. When the time for namáz came the Englishman, together with the group of four to six individuals who were with him, went to perform namáz in the masjid in the neighbourhood.

When he sat down to make wudhú he saw that the outlet channel at the bottom was dirty and filthy. He asked: "Is there nobody here to keep the area clean?" His companions replied: "Yes, there is." The Englishman said: "Oho! Then how offensively filthy is this drainage pipe! It has filled with dirt and rubbish!"

The Muslim mu'ezzin remarked: "Arè! You have become a Muslim but the smell of being English has not left your brains. Cleanliness, cleanliness, cleanliness – is all that you know!"

Do you see how this lowly paid worker is addressing a Muslim? He has the idea that cleanliness is to be found with the English, that cleanliness is an attribute of the English. Actually, the English learnt it from us. Yet, what does the Muslim think? He thinks that it is their quality. He calls one of our qualities their quality! Tell me now, what cure is there for this

ignorance?

One from the group of refined people that were with the Englishman reassured him: "Do not take any notice of what he said. These poor mu'ezzins tend to be such simple-minded people." This person thought that perhaps the Englishman felt insulted by the remarks of the mu'ezzin.

The Englishman said: "I have not become a Muslim on the basis of such comments. I brought ímán after having studied Islám and having understood it. I understand exactly the high status of cleanliness in Islám."

This is what he said. Assess from this, O you writers and students, as to what is he saying. We have not understood the high status of cleanliness even after having studied it here. They have learnt everything from us. Nowadays we have become so simple-minded as to think that cleanliness is part of their culture, that cleanliness is something that belongs to them.

Yet, what is the command? What is the instruction that Alláh Ta'álá gave to Rasúlulláh ?صلى الله عليه وسلم

نَظِّفُوْا اَفْنِيْتَكُمْ

Clean the area outside your homes.

This is the principle in cleanliness. I mentioned at the commencement of this majlis that there are certain principles in Islám. Amongst these is this one concerning cleanliness:

نَظِّفُوْا اَفْنِيْتَكُمْ

Clean the area outside your homes.

The area outside the house has a fence. The area beyond the fence is the area referred to. So, what is the teaching of Islám, that is, of Alláh Ta'álá and of His Rasúl صلى الله عليه وسلم ? It is that the area beyond the door or gate from whence you depart, keep it clean.

It is not stated that you should keep your houses clean. This is a grammatical manner of expression. The instruction is to keep the outside area clean. When the order is given to keep the area beyond the gate clean then what would be the order to keep the inside of the house clean? Work this out by yourselves.

In the cities and in the villages, the municipalities have a department dealing with cleanliness. They have learnt all this from us. Drains should be kept clean. Roads should be kept clean. If anything is lying along the road, pick it up with your hand and place it on the side. It should not happen that some banana peels are lying there and somebody slips on them. Or there is a brick or other obstacle in the way and somebody who is in haste knocks against it and falls. Or a blind person knocks against it and falls. If there are thorns lying on the path, remove these. The Hadíth Sharíf states:

اِمَاطَةُ الْاَذٰى عَنِ الطَّرِيْقِ

Whatever item is injurious, remove it from the path.

This is a branch of ímán. So, just see. The department of cleanliness is from us. Others have learnt from us the concept of keeping roads clean and keeping the drainage system clean.

Do you now understand what Islám is? Do you now understand the culture of Islám, the high status of cleanliness in Islám and the etiquettes? Do the people know all this? Speak the truth. They do not know anything.

Listen some more! Somebody has eaten a meal but he has not cleaned his teeth. A person has eaten raw onions and he has not cleansed his mouth. All of these should not be done.

Have you now heard some of the laws of cleanliness? Are these orders from our Islám or are they from the English? They have learnt them from us. All highly meritorious acts that are in them they have learnt from us. Our household folk do not even know this.

When I had gone to England I was invited to one city. I read the Hadíth Sharíf in full:

نَظِّفُوْا اَفْنِيَتَكُمْ

Clean the area outside your homes.

I then said: "People think that there is cleanliness in the English and that there is no cleanliness in Islám. Actually, in Islám the order is to clean even the area that is in front of your front door. From this one can gauge that if the order is given that the area in front of the residence has to be kept

clean why should there not be an order to clean the house itself? And when the order is there to clean the house to what a greater extent will there not be the order to keep the body clean, the body being a part of insán?

Cleansing the rúh is Tasawwuf

The very existence of insán is comprised of the physical body and the rúh. The Hadíth Sharíf which was mentioned above was then used by this khádim to substantiate Tasawwuf. It was done in the following manner: When the order is given to cleanse the physical body, which is the external part of insán, then why would there not be the order to cleanse the rúh which is the metaphysical part of insán, and on which is dependent the existence of the physical body and its maintenance? The cleansing of this metaphysical part (bátin) is termed Tasawwuf. What else is it but this?

With the taufíq of Alláh Ta'álá and fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá rúhániyet was thus proved. Now do you understand Islámic culture?

Up to where have I progressed? Up to this point that culture is not towards insán only, but also towards trees, flowers, dogs and horses.

The tálibe-'ilm is a sháhe-Dín – king of Dín

Yesterday, during the discourse I had stated that the tálibe-'ilm is truly a king of Dín (sháhe-Dín). And how does a king behave? Is he uncultured that he sits wherever he wants to? Whatever gully he wants to visit he wanders into it? Whatever shopping mall he wants to see he just enters? That he wanders around the bus terminals? Whatever inner impulse he has he just follows it?

Is this your culture? Commoners of a different category than yours just join you and participate in the entertainment and participate in your games. Is this the manner that you behave?

If you want to play sport, do it in your own areas. Who is stopping you? But why should others come and join you in your games? Why do you go and participate in the games of others? You are tálibe-'ilm. Know yourselves. Only when you recognise who you are will others recognise you. Otherwise others will make condescending statements: "These are tálibe-'ilm roaming around here and there. If they are studying in the city then they roam

around in the Chándní Chowk and the shopping malls. They stroll around in the parks and the gardens. These are tálibe-'ilm! This is their culture!"

This is a brief explanation of culture that has been presented in front of you. Recognise the elevated status of 'ilm!

What is this elevated status of 'ilm? This is that absolute 'ilm (ilme-qat'í) which Alláh Ta'álá revealed to Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم by means of wahí. This is what the tálibe-'ilm is acquiring. From this make an assessment what the cultured behaviour should be within and what the cultured behaviour should be outside.

Today the discourse has been on culture. When the order has been given to cleanse the area outside the door, then should one's clothes be filthy, and that body which is in the clothes, should that be filthy? And that major fundamental of life – that is, the rúh – should that be filthy?

What is this culture and cleanliness of the area outside the door stating? Keep it clean. And the courtyard within the precincts, keep it filthy? And the room inside the house, keep it filthy? And where one sits and lies down and sleeps, keep it filthy? These are all areas apart from the body.

Let us go a step further: Keep one's clothes filthy? Keep the body filthy? Keep the heart filthy? What about the rúh, which is the fundamental of life – what will happen if the rúh departs? So, this rúh, the most fundamental of all fundamentals, keep this rúh filthy? Ponder what the Hadíth Sharíf mentioned above is stating.

A very brief and comprehensive mas'alah of Tasawwuf – of taríqat, of Sulúk – has been enunciated. This one Hadíth Sharíf is sufficient.

The first requirement is ímán

As for the rúh, what is the first requirement? It is ímán. It is not kufr which is complete filth. So, for rúhániyet the first requirement is that there should be ímán. Thereafter, there should be those aspects which are the demands of ímán, namely that there should be cleanliness of the záhir and cleanliness of the bátin, the heart. This should be embellished with the akhláqe-hamídah and not with akhláqe-mazmúmah – that is, the akhláqe-razílah should not be found in it. Just see: this is what the Hadíth Sharíf is stating.

In summary

Having said all this, this bandah is returning to that point where this discourse had commenced. It is this that in order to acquire Sulúk, tazkiyah-nafs, takhliyah-nafs, takhliyah and zínate-rúh only this much has to be done: move away through the left side and come on to the right side. On the left side is corruption and on the right side is goodness.

Ají! On the left side is the latífah of the qalb (heart) below which – below the navel – is the latífah of the nafs. Purifying the nafs by cutting the nafsání branches with "Lá", one proceeds. Where to? Towards the heart. With "iláh" it is then dragged through the heart over to the right side. With the pronouncement of "ha" the whole creation is thrown away behind the back. The whole creation has been discarded. And when "illalláhu" is recited it denotes that only the Creator remains. This is a brief explanation of the methodology of the zikr of "Lá-iláha-illalláh".

Do you understand? Just by merely sitting here the creation has been removed. Or has it not been removed? This is "Lá-iláha-illalláhu", which is embedded in the creation all the time. Shierk may be manifesting in tauhíd. Even though it may not be major shierk but there are other types of shierk. This "Lá-iláha-illalláh" is there to remove this shierk.

In the commencement of the majlis it was also stated that "Lá-iláha" is purity. Through it purification is achieved. "Illalláh" is goodness (tayyib). When "Lá-iláha" is recited the creation is discarded behind the back. When "illalláhu" is recited the Creator remains and the creation is disregarded. The creation is overlooked. Our actions and behaviour will show whether this indifference to the creation has been attained or not. Actions and behaviour will bear witness. What is achieved by merely claiming or saying so? One's actions and behaviour will show whether "illalláhu" has come in or not.

A person may be making the zikr of "Lá-iláha" but has the creation left the heart or not? He may be reciting "illalláh" but has the Creator – accompanied by the love of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم – remained or not? Evidence of this will be seen in his actions and behaviour.

You may have studied tauhíd in "Sharah-'Aqá'id". The reality of tauhíd is

what has been explained here. This is the method of making zikr that brings about tauhíd. It is not just a method of reciting a tasbíh. Everything has an effect. When? Only when it is utilised according to its correct method.

My brothers! Are you listening to something or not?

Up to now we still do not know the reality of zikr is even though one has become a molvísáhib. Please forgive my saying so. Up to now he still has not attained the recognition (ma'rifat) that this is what the Kalimah Tayyibah is stating.

So, af'ál, aqwál, ahwál and akhláq – actions, statements, conditions and behaviour – will testify whether the creation has gone out of the heart or not. And whether the Creator has been accommodated or not.

Áhá! I have remembered the Hadíth Sharíf! I will relate this and end my discourse. There is a Hadíthe-Qudsí that Záte-Bárí-Ta'álá is stating:

لَا يَسَعُنِيْ اِلَّا قَلْبُ الْمُؤْمِنِ

I cannot be accommodated except in the heart of a mu'min.

Alláh Ta'álá is stating – it is a Hadíthe-Qudsí – that: "I cannot be accommodated except in the heart of a mu'min."

Now introspect! How should that heart be? Can the creation be in that heart as well as the Creator? When the creation is there how will He be accommodated? So, to acquire what the Hadíthe-Qudsí indicates, the method is to recite "Lá-iláha" and fling the creation behind one's back; and by reciting "illalláh" only the Creator will remain.

Du'á

May Alláh Ta'álá make us cultured, with refinement of character, in the correct meaning of these qualities. Alláh Ta'álá make it that we understand "Lá-iláha-illalláh" in the correct manner; that we understand it, recognise it and imbibe it.

May He grant us the taufíq to acquire, with a righteous and beautiful effort the above according to our actions (a'mál), conditions (ahwál) and character (akhláq), with concomitant constancy in obedience (tá'at) and constancy in the zikr of Alláh Ta'álá. Alláh Ta'álá grant us taufíq and grant the tálibe-mukhlis taufíq.

Khudá háfiz.

MALFÚZ

A tremendous need for sohbat

[Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه *said that]*

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم said: "My Rabb gave me the best of (Díní) ta'lím; and my Rabb taught me the best of adab (manners/ etiquettes)."

There is a great need for sohbat. The rectification and the purification of character of the sahábah (may Alláh Ta'álá be pleased with all of them) did not take place merely through 'ilm. However, their complete tarbiyet took place in the sohbat of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Alláh Ta'álá states:

يَآَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا اتَّقُوا اللهَ وَكُوْنُوْا مَعَ الصَّادِقِيْنَ ۝

O you who believe! Have fear of Alláh Ta'álá and stay with those who are true (and firmly founded) in the Dín. (S9.119.)

Here "stay with" is to be taken as "being in the sohbat of". From the áyet it is apparent that the safeguarding of 'ímán is through taqwá because after the word "'ímán" comes "ittaqulláh". Thus, the safeguarding of 'ímán is by means of being in the sohbat of the sádiqín.

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**[A book that is highly recommended is "Coprophilia or a Peck of Dirt", by Terence McLaughlin. I.S.B.N. 030493741. It is on the subject of community health in Britain in the recent past, written by Terence McLaughlin, who was an authority on public health and hygiene. Very few copies still exist. A Google search will show where copies may still be obtained.]*

BOOKLET NUMBER TWENTY FOUR

Shawwál 1434 – August 2013

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Alhamdulilláh, with the fadhl of Alláh Ta'álá and the barkat of our Sheikh's رحمة الله عليه du'ás, this 24th booklet is now in front of you.

All those who have a very busy schedule, especially professionals, have to be very conscious of time and appointments. Due to changing circumstances, adjusting schedules is almost a daily challenge. It therefore becomes very important for such a person to prioritise his tasks. It becomes essential for him to be able to give precedence to what is of primary importance and what is not.

In this majlis our Sheikh رحمة الله عليه discusses this very topic of "objectives" and giving priority to tasks. He spells out quite clearly what needs to be given priority and importance and what is not to be given priority and importance..

Part of our Hadhrat's technique of teaching was to ask questions, many of which are rhetoric. The whole purpose was to make the listener think and ponder. So that the topics and different points become firmly embedded in the minds and hearts of the listeners Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه would discuss the same topics from different angles. He would give simple, easy to understand illustrations, making it possible for the listeners to comprehend many points which appear to be very complicated.

This is not a very lengthy majlis. However, the basic principles and rules that have been explained in this majlis are very basic. If one were to ponder on them and try and see how it impacts one in one's life one will see that it impacts on all 24 hours of our daily life activities. One can go further and say that impacts on every minute of every hour of our life and even on every breath that we take. What is the objective of every breath that we take?

May Alláh Ta'álá make us all understand the issues discussed and may He grant us the taufíq to act according to these teachings.

Dr. I.M.

Hadhrat Mauláná Dr. Háfiz Tanweer Ahmed Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه

It is with great sadness that we note the passing away of Hadhrat Mauláná Dr. Háfiz Tanweer Ahmed Khan Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. He was born on 16th Zul-Hajj, 1339/ 21st August, 1921 in present-day Rájpútánah, Haryánah, India, and passed away in hospital in Islamabad, Pakistan, on 23, Zul-Hajj, 1433/ 7th November, 2012, at the age of 94 Islamic date (92 solar calendar).

His family lineage was Rájput and the men were mainly in the army. However, Hadhrat was inclined towards Dín. His initial education, Díní and secular, took place in his hometown. He completed his hifz there as well. He then went to Delhi to further his Díní ta'lím at Madrasah Ameeniyah.

While still a student in Delhi he had already established contact with Hadhrat Mauláná Thánwí رحمة الله عليه and he used to frequent Thánah Bhawan. Hadhrat Mauláná Thánwí رحمة الله عليه recommended that he establishes an isláhí contact with one of Hadhrat Mauláná Thánwí's رحمة الله عليه khulafá. He then went to Jalálábád. He stayed over in Jalálábád and studied there, completing his studies in Deoband Madrasah. He was granted khiláfat by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه in 1965 or1966. Later, he was also given khiláfat from Hadhrat Mauláná Faqír Muhammad Sáhib رحمة الله عليه in Pakistan.

He was in Jalálábád just before Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه passed away, being fortunate to have heard his sheikh's last advices (wasíyet) which he recorded and published.

He made several trips to South Africa and other parts of the world to spread the taríqat of his sheikh, building up a large following. He also appointed khulafá to carry on where he had left off.

Among his varied activities at different times were the following: He worked for the newspaper, "Jang"; he worked for "Hamdard" (pharmaceutical company); he qualified as a homeopathic doctor and ran a practice; he ran a bee-farm; he was amír of the Muhájir in Pakistan; he taught in madáris; he made imámat; he ran a furniture shop; he ran the khánqáh for Hadhrat Mauláná Faqír Muhammad Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. He also wrote a number of books,

some of which have been translated into English.

May Alláh Ta'álá put núr in his qabr and grant him high stages in Jannat.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[This is a translation of a majlis conducted by Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه *in Jalálábád on the 13th Jumádu-ath-Thání 1409, corresponding with the 22nd January, 1989.]*

MAQSÚD AND GHAIR-MAQSÚD – OBJECTIVES AND NON-OBJECTIVES

نَحْمَدَهُ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

Concerning objectives, these are two types: objective/s (maqsúd) and non-objective/s (ghair-maqsúd). Whatever is maqsúd is also matlúb (desired/ quested/ sought/ pursued). And whatever is not maqsúd is not matlúb either.

Whatever is matlúb – whatever is desired, sought and quested – one should dedicate oneself to it with great care. One should spare nothing in attaining it.

On the other hand, to dedicate oneself completely and spare nothing in attaining what is not maqsúd and matlúb, is contrary to intelligence. The demand of intelligence is that one differentiates between what is important and what is not important; and then to give priority to what is important. There is a rule of rationality:

اَلْاَهَمُّ هُوَالْاَقْدَمُ

Whatever is important takes priority.

One needs to tackle with courage whatever is important. That is, one has to be courageous in attaining it. One has to exert all one’s courage in attaining it.

If one were to utilise one’s courage and deplete it in pursuing what is ghair-maqsúd then there will be decreased courage in pursuing what is maqsúd.

To repeat: There are two aspects: maqsúd and ghair-maqsúd. One has to pursue and keep on pursuing what is maqsúd, with great care and with complete absorption and concentration, then only will one attain what is maqsúd.

The root of the word maqsúd – مقصود – is – قصد (qasad – resolve/ attempt). That is, one has to bring into amal (deeds) with one's volitional resolve – one's ikhtiyárí-irádah. When one says: "This is my qasad," one is saying that this is my resolve. One does not allow any interference between the resolve and attainment of the objective. It would be an obstruction. When there is a resolve then why did this interference take place between the two? There is now an obstruction.

Whatever is maqsúd (one's objective) one's irádah and maqsad have a part in attaining it. One's resolve has a role in achieving one's objective. Therefore, one should not direct one's attention to what is ghair-maqsúd in attaining what is maqsúd. One should not incline towards that which is a non-objective.

Yes, if in attaining what is maqsúd that which is ghair-maqsúd is of assistance, then the ghair-maqsúd will also become maqsúd. So, even though per se, in itself, it is ghair-maqsúd, yet it is helpful and supportive in attaining what is maqsúd, this ghair-maqsúd also becomes maqsúd with what is maqsúd.

There are many examples of this.

Existence requires food, clothing and having habitation

The maqsúd for one's existence is to satisfy hunger, cover the body and having a place to stay. To attain these there is a need for other objectives. These are not maqsúd in themselves but assist in attaining what is maqsúd. What are these? These are trade, farming, employment and so forth. The basic maqsúd in order to exist is to satisfy hunger, to clothe the body and to have a habitation. However, wealth is needed for these; and to attain wealth there is the necessity to engage in trade, farming, manufacturing, artisanship, employment, and so forth. These are not objectives. These are subservient to what is maqsúd and matlúb. These are means. These are instruments and not the final goal. These are methods.

Now, if a person can fill his stomach, clothe his body and have a place to stay without having to engage in farming, in trade, in manufacturing and artisanship, in employment and so forth, has he attained his maqsúd or not? So what is the need for farming, trade, employment and so forth? The maqsúd has been attained.

Do you understand?

To repeat: If a person has attained what is maqsúd without effort, what is the need for engaging in trade, in engaging in farming, in engaging in employment, and so forth? These are not objectives.

If these were maqásid-e-zátíyah – objectives in themselves – you would not have found anybody not involved in these, whether it was farming or trade or employment. You would not have found anybody unoccupied.

However, some individuals (makhlúq) are not involved in farming, trade and employment, yet they have food to eat, clothes to wear and a place to stay: farming, trade, employment and so forth are not objectives. There are many from among the creation who do not ask anybody and they do not go begging to houses, yet they do have food, clothing and a habitation. They have achieved their objectives without engaging in those activities which are not objectives in themselves.

But the whole creation is not like these people. So, there are such activities which are ghair-maqsúd in themselves but are aids to attaining the primary objectives. These aids are of such a nature that without these the maqsad will not be attained.

The example of namáz and wudhú

The example of the above is the following from the Sharí'ah, from Fiqh:

The basic maqsúd for the mu'min is namáz. The basic maqsúd is not wudhú. However, wudhú which is ghair-maqsúd is such that without it the maqsúd of namáz cannot be achieved. Therefore, wudhú is now maqsúd for the maqsúd of namáz.

Further, wudhú is performed with water. So, water is not an objective in itself. It is ghair-maqsúd. Another reason is that if water is not available then tayyamum is its substitute. So, the basic maqsúd is tahárat (purity). This is attained through wudhú. Wudhú is achieved by means of water.

In the absence of water the substitute is tayyamum. And tayyamum is achieved by means of sand, whether the sand is in the form of baked clay (as a clay water pot or lotá) or whether the sand is in the form of a layer of dust on a clean piece of cloth.

So, the maqsúd is tahárat which is attained by performing wudhú, with water being the means; or with tayyamum, sand being the means. This wudhú and tayyamum are not maqsúd in themselves, in that after making wudhú or tayyamum a person does not perform any other 'ibádat but he feels satisfied just with the wudhú or tayyamum.

For example: He sat making wudhú in such a manner that his wudhú did not come to an end while the jamá'at namáz came to an end. So, was the maqsúd just wudhú or was the wudhú for namáz? So, why did he take so long in performing wudhú that the real objective – the maqsúd of namáz with jamá'at – was lost? He forsook it. Again I ask: Why did he take so long in performing wudhú so that what was maqsúd, the namáz with jamá'at, was lost?

The basic of namáz was that it should be performed with jamá'at. When the 'ibádat of namáz was initiated it was initiated with jamá'at. Hadhrat Jibra'íl عليه السلام came to perform namáz. He made imámat for two days, establishing the compulsion (farídhah) of namáz with jamá'at.

So, the basic of namáz, as long as there is no shar'í excuse, is namáz with jamá'at. However, permission has been given to make qadhá of it by reading it alone without jamá'at if one has missed the namáz with jamá'at. Nevertheless, the basic has been omitted.

This was a Fiqhí example.

Using thirst as an example of maqsúd and ghair-maqsúd

Try and understand the above from a physical example: A person is thirsty. Water is to quench thirst. Water is not the basic maqsúd – it is to counteract thirst. It is to quench thirst. It is not the basic objective.

It is possible that there exists such an individual who does not experience thirst. He does not get dehydrated. So, what need has he for water? Water is to quench thirst and avoid dehydration. He has neither of the two, so what need has he for water? If the need is not there then why should he

go to the well? Proceeding to the well was to counteract and quench thirst and these are not there.

In fact, in the past some auliyá-Alláh have existed who were such that they had no need of water for six months at a time. If they merely tasted water, well and good. Also they had no need for food. If they merely tasted it, well and good. That was all.

Yes, in obedience to the orders of the Sharí'at they would partake of food and water. If one keeps rozah during the day the order of the Sharí'at is to make iftár after the sun sets.

It is necessary to carry out the orders of the Sharí'at. If there is no obedience to the orders of the Sharí'at then what kind of a bondsman is he? What kind of a buzurg is he? What kind of a walí is he?

So, this walí would keep rozah and at the time of iftár he would take an almond kernel that he had and nibble a small piece the size of a mustard seed from one end of the almond. You do know the size of mustard seed? As for water, he would take a sip. Do you see this web space between the thumb and the index finger? He would place some water there and sip that much. This was now his food and drink for iftár. Simultaneously it was also sufficient for his sehrí. How amazing that this was his food and drink – it was simultaneously his iftár and his sehrí! He kept rozah the following day and followed the same process at iftár time. He carried on in this manner for six months, nibbling from the almond and sipping a few drops of water.

Now, show me: Does such a person require employment? What need is there to trade? What need is there to do farming? What need is there for manufacturing and artisanship? This person has achieved his primary objective. Has he not? Note: This is for him and not for everybody.

He has a small place for habitation. He wears such clothes which show no sign of tearing. There are no signs of dirt on the clothes as the texture and colour are such as to "eat up" the dirt.

When there are such individuals existing, then it is apparent that farming, trade and employment do not form part of the original maqásid but these are means of attaining the original maqsúd.

You have been given one Fiqhí example of wudhú and one of human

physical needs, of food, drink, earning and clothes. At the very least these prove that these are means and methods of attaining the original maqsad.

Discarding the means is only for the few elite

Not everybody is like that. How many are like the buzurg mentioned above? Therefore, that person who is not like him, generally has need of money in order to obtain food, drink and habitation. And obtaining money is by engaging in farming or trade or manufacturing and artisanship. Therefore, it will become necessary to establish these. Generally, these will be engaged in order to attain the basic maqásid

So, here the imitation of such buzurgs is not permissible. Imitating them would be harám. For instance: A person is thirsty. He is also hungry. Water is present. Food is present. But he does not drink the water and he does not eat the food. He is now on the verge of death. If he does not drink the water and he does not eat of the food and he dies, it is a harám death.

To live is an objective

Life is matlúb. From one's own side to adopt any such method that will result in death is harám. For example: If somebody were to kill himself by taking strychnine or by shooting himself, his death will be a harám death. Is it not so?

Can it is said that his death was set out like this? What fault is it of his? Can one say that this was Alláh Ta'álá's order that his death should be in this manner? The question one should ask is: Was dying his objective or not? Did he not resolve to die or not? He was warned against it. His death had intent behind it – there was resolve in it; there was a desired result in it.

Life is matlúb – it is desired, it is sought. Seeing that it is matlúb, those correct and legitimate means and avenues are also matlúb in pursuance of this matlúb.

In essence: That, which is basic and is an objective (maqsúd) in itself, has an important status. It has to be given priority. It is to be acquired primarily. It has to be specifically procured.

Ghair-maqsúd is of two types

Firstly: What is ghair-maqsúd in itself in attaining what is maqsúd, but it is an aid, an assistance – that help is obtained from it in attaining what is maqsúd – then this also becomes maqsúd.

Secondly: However, if it is of no assistance, no help is forthcoming from it, then it is not maqsúd in itself and it is not maqsúd for the primary maqsúd. Then to incline towards it, to turn one's direction towards it and to pursue it heart and soul – what is it? It is harám!

So, all obstacles in attaining what is maqsúd are harám. That which is a hindrance in attaining what is maqsúd will be a cause for greater hindrance. It will be harám.

Examples: Wealth is acquired through theft, acquired through robbery, acquired through fraud and acquired through usurpation. To sustain life, which is maqsúd, wealth is necessary. So, wealth has been acquired in the examples above. However, these means adopted are not from the maqásid but are part of the obstacles.

The obstacles are of such gravity that if you prepare some food with this wealth and you sit down to eat it and you recite "Bismilláh" on it, then this is harám. This is a major sin. In fact, there is danger that it may turn to kufr. The reason being that you considered this wealth to be nutrition, whereas Záte-Bárí-Ta'álá states that it is not nutrition. One recites on nutrition (ghizá). One does not recite "Bismilláh" on non-nutrition (ghair-ghizá). So, you are reciting "Bismilláh" on ghair-ghizá.

It is obvious that you are eating edible food but Alláh Ta'álá is saying:

يَأْكُلُوْنَ فِيْ بُطُوْنِهِمْ نَارًا ۚ

They swallow only fire into their bellies (S.4.10.)

You are filling your bellies with fire, you are eating fire. You are eating what is harám and filling your bellies. You are not eating what is edible. In appearance it looks like food. In reality it is nár, that is, fire.

So, how can one read "Bismilláh" on eating harám? How can one read "Bismilláh" on consuming strychnine?

To recapitulate: What is ghair-maqsúd can be of two types. One is that which is an aid to what is maqsúd. It is of assistance. It will enable one to attain what is maqsúd in a good manner; in a manner that is highly cultured; in a manner that brings about delight, with sukún and with joy. This is one type. It is also included in attaining what is maqsúd. It assists in obtaining what is halál and tayyib, which is the basic maqsad.

This negates the second type which is not maqsúd in itself and which does not assist in attaining what is the basic maqsúd. This second type in itself is not maqsúd and matlúb. Whatever is really maqsúd and matlúb derives no assistance from this type.

This will be termed "lá-yání". I repeat: This is called lá-yání. What is another term for it?" It is "laghu". That which is not maqsúd and what is really maqsúd derives no help from it, is termed "lá-yání"/ "laghu" in the terminology of the Sharí'at. Haqq-Ta'álá has stated in the Qur'án Sharíf:

وَالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ عَنِ اللَّغْوِ مُعْرِضُوْنَ ۙ

And who avoid worthless conversation. (S.23.3.)

What is the noble status (shán) of a Muslim? This has been mentioned from the preceding passages. What is said here I will put in my words: A mu'min, being a mu'min, is involved in useless acts (laghu)? What type of ímán has this mu'min got? What type of Muslim is he?

The proof has been given. As if to say: What type of Muslim is he, what type of mu'min is he that he is involved in such activities which have no benefit? In fact, there is the additional danger of causing some harm.

The shán of a mu'min is to avoid laghú

So, a mu'min is one who does not involve himself in useless activities. He turns his back on such activities. The word used is "i'ráz": He turns his face away; he turns his back on them; he does not direct his face that way; he does not focus on them because those activities are laghú, without benefit, lá-yání. To be involved in activities which are laghú is far removed from the shán of a mu'min. They have no value in attaining the maqsúd of one's life.

Do you understand?

مِنْ حُسْنِ اِسْلَامِ الْمَرْءِتَرْكُهُ مَا لَايَعْنِيْهِ

Of the beauty of a person's Islám is that he shuns what is useless/ futile.

What type of Muslim is he that he involves himself in lá-yání? Laghú is not maqsúd and it does not assist in attaining one's maqsúd. It is, thus, contrary to the demands of his ímán and his Islám. It is not part of the noble and dignified status (shán) of a mu'min Muslim that he involves himself in laghú and lá-yání activities and speech. Yes, he has ímán – he is a mu'min and he is a Muslim.

Plain ímán and sweet ímán

If a person enjoys eating raw meat and uncooked dál – that is, uncooked food – well and good. This is food for his body. His ímán may also be at that level. But who is prepared to eat food that is raw?

If a person is not prepared to consume such food for the batan (stomach) then why should he be prepared to accept such raw nutrition for his bátin (rúh)? Why should he sit content? How can this be acceptable to one's ímán and one's intelligence?

Our fundamental concern should be the bátin and not the batan. Our basic concern is not the stomach. Our basic concern is the rúh, the heart. So, what kind of intelligence is it that a person desires well-cooked, excellent, very delicious, invigourating, aromatic, beautiful in appearance and good tasting food for his bodily batan, and he has no desires for his ímán that it should be "beautiful in appearance" and "tasting delicious"? Whereas this should be his real desire and quest.

That is why Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, while making mention of ímán in general, also spoke about the sweetness of ímán, sweetness in the sense of the opposite of bitterness. There is a specific chapter called "Báb Haláwatul-Ímán" in Bukhárí Sharíf. The Ahádíth Sharíf mentioned in this chapter deal with those things that result in the sweetness in ímán, those items which cause progress in ímán.

After mentioning these items there comes the following:

لِيَزْدَادُوْٓا اِيْمَانًا مَّعَ اِيْمَانِهِمْ ؕ

That they might add faith to their faith. (S.48.4.)

The ímán that was there could be increased with greater ímán. It is apparent that ímán also increases. Just as the body increases (in size and strength) there is progress in ímán as well.

With correct nutrition for the body, the body will increase in size or strength. Or will it not? Similarly, when those items are utilised that will increase ímán then ímán will also increase. It may happen that, after having consumed correct bodily nutrition, the body's size or strength does not increase but it can never happen that, having adopted the measures to increase ímán, ímán will not increase. This cannot happen.

With the body it can happen that the very same medication that was proving of benefit is now causing harm. However, by adopting the measures that increase ímán it can never happen that ímán will decrease, that weakness and feebleness comes into ímán.

So, what does intelligence dictate? Just as you are striving for bodily nutrition, even to a greater extent should you be striving for progress and an increase in your ímán. This latter will go with you. The former bodily nutrition will not.

Warning against stupidity

The person concerned about nourishing his body and neglecting his bátin is a fool of the highest degree – he is lacking in intelligence to the highest degree – yet he considers himself to be intelligent! He does what is stupid and thinks himself to be clever! A robber after robbing and a thief after stealing consider themselves, in their own opinion, to be successful! Not having been apprehended they are exultant. They dance in joy. Are they stupid or not? To tell a lie they consider to be success. To tell the truth they consider to be failure. I speak in mild terms. It should not happen that they become káfir!

Why?

Truth leads to salvation & lies lead to destruction

The reason is that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم speaks on behalf of Alláh Ta'álá:

اَلصِّدْقُ يُنْجِيْ وَالْكِذْبُ يُهْلِكُ

Truthfulness leads to success (finally), whereas lies (finally) lead to destruction.

Alláh Ta'álá is saying that there is salvation in speaking the truth and destruction in telling lies. Yet, what is it that the Muslims today are saying, mostly? They say: "Yes, molvísáhib. Just keep quiet. Forget those days. Nowadays there is salvation in telling as much lies as one can, in cheating and defrauding as much as one can. Success lies in this. Just see how successful we are and see how the truthful poor are dying from hunger."

This is absolutely false. The truthful never ever died from speaking the truth. Ask them. They will say: "Alláh! We make shukr to You!" Will anybody make shukr on telling lies? No, never. On telling the truth they will say: "Alláh! We make shukr to you!"

If a person has usurped property or a house will he say, "Shukr to Alláh!"? What will his heart inside say? Whereas that person who spoke the truth, even though he has not achieved much, on his meager attainments he will say: "Shukr to Alláh!"

To observe the highest degree of truthfulness can lead only to success; and the highest degree of lies can lead only to destruction. If it is not today, it will be tomorrow. If not tomorrow then later. It must come to pass.

For arguments sake, because of some wisdom even if no destruction befalls the liar in this world there is definite destruction in the hereafter in which is the other life to come. This also happens.

One needs to make a little bit of sabr for a short time. There is a need for forbearance. Success is only in truthfulness and destruction is in lying.

The qissah of a truthful bamboo seller

Hadhratwálá related a qissah that took place while he was still in Kánpúr:

One poor pious person, one who was very cautious of halál and harám, opened a shop to sell bamboo. Bamboo comes in all grades. Some are hollow, others are solid and some may be infested with insects.

Now, when people came to buy bamboo the poor shopkeeper used to tell

them: “Go and look and choose what you like.” They used to look around and select the bamboo and indicate what they wished to buy. At this point the shopkeeper used to advise them: “This bamboo is of this grade. That one is of a different grade. This is slightly hollow inside even though it looks solid from the outside. This one’s price is less. The solid, good quality bamboo costs more. You can now decide whether you want to buy this one or that one.”

The mas’alah of the Sharí’at states that if a shopkeeper is aware of a fault in his goods he should disclose it to the buyer. If he does not disclose the fault and the customer buys the item, pays the full price, goes home and only then discovers the fault and defect, the seller should then change the item. The shopkeeper has to substitute it for a faultless item. If this is not done then the seller is a sinner. So, the fault should be disclosed.

This poor shopkeeper kept on with this practice. He had very few sales. The other long-established shopkeepers who were of the type who used to lie, deceive and defraud used to laugh at him and say: “Oh dear! Is business done in this manner? Does a business run this way? Sell your shop!”

The other shopkeepers used to go home in the evening with good profits while this honest shopkeeper had minimal sales. The others used to laugh at him and mock him. They saw only with external eyes that honesty causes destruction whereas the lies of these fraudsters made them flourish.

However, this honest bamboo seller paid no attention to them. He did not discard his honesty. This is what is called “to be pakká” – to be resolute, firm. He is seeing with his own eyes that his sales are few even though he is honest; and that the deceitful traders are very busy and making lots of money. This is what he is witnessing with his own eyes. But he was a pakká man of the Sharí’at. He was not half-baked. He was resolute and firm. How firm and resolute was he? He was as the ones described by Záte-Bárí-Ta'álá:

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ قَالُوْا رَبُّنَا اللهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوْاتَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوْا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوْا وَأَبْشِرُوْا
بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِيْ كُنْتُمْ تُوْعَدُوْنَ ۝

Those who say: “Our Rabb is Alláh,” and are steadfast, the angels will

descend on them saying: Do not fear and do not grieve but hear good news of the Garden which you were promised. (S.41.30.)

"Inna" means: "Truly, without doubt." "Illazína qálú –those who say." Say what? "Rabbunalláhú – that our Rabb is Alláh." Who is the One who is nurturing us, rearing us? They said that it was Alláh Ta'álá. "Thummas-taqámú – they then remained steadfast on it." "Mustaqím, istiqámú". They remained resolute and firm. They are given good news: Angels descend on them. Words bringing consolation, bringing happiness, bringing cheer, bringing joy – these are the states instilled in the hearts through the angels.

To continue with the qissah: The honest shopkeeper remained firm and resolute. The final effect and result of his steadfastness was that his business flourished. Customers came in large numbers. The people had developed full confidence in his integrity. On the other hand, the other shops started experiencing a decline in their businesses. Their sales started dropping.

Have you seen the results of remaining firm? He remained with sabr and forbearance. Have you seen the effects of remaining resolute on the Dín?

There are not just one or two incidents of this type. There are numerous such qissas where the bondsmen of Alláh Ta'álá stood firmly on the truth and adopted istiqámat. That is why they were successful.

Yes, there was a need for them to show a little sabr and there was a need for tahammul (forbearance). There is also the need to avoid uneasiness and the need to develop firmness in one's istiqámat. Then you will see!

Ponder over this.

One has to remain firm. One has to put up a bold front. One has to remain courageous. One has to remain charming. One has to be spirited. Is faint-heartedness good, or is it better to be strong and courageous? It is good to be strong and courageous after being faint-hearted. There should be no display of faint-heartedness after having developed courageousness. There is a great need for strength and courage.

To recapitulate: One needs to attach oneself, dedicate oneself heart and soul and immerse oneself in attaining that objective which is the real maqsúd.

And that ghair-maqsúd which, if it assists in attaining what is maqsúd, if it is an aid, if it is a means of bringing ease, then that ghair-maqsúd is also included in what is maqsúd and becomes maqsúd.

As for that ghair-maqsúd which in itself is ghair-maqsúd and it is of no assistance and aid in attaining what is maqsúd – there is absolutely no support gained from it – then it becomes necessary in leaving off such ghair-maqsúd. It is neither matlúb in itself and nor is it matlúb for attaining what is matlúb.

Examples of these have been given. The example of wudhú was given from the Shar'í perspective and the example of food was given from the physical perspective.

Here is another example:

Nikáh is half of Dín and is matlúb

Marriage (nikáh) is matlúb. Or is it not matlúb? We are not speaking of that person who is not fit for marriage. In other words, he is physically unfit or he has not the financial means to support a wife. Physical unfitness means that he cannot fulfil the physical rights of the wife. It is not necessary to explain this.

So, nikáh is matlúb. The world says so. As for the Sharí'at, it is considered to be half of ímán. The Hadíth Sharíf states:

اَلنِّكَاح نِصْفُ الْاِيْمَانِ

Nikáh is half of ímán.

Nikáh forms part of maqásid. Or is it not? Nikáh is maqsúd.

So, this person goes to the bazár to buy some clothes for the wedding, nikáh being maqsúd. So, is the buying of these clothes maqsúd? These clothes are not the maqsúd. The maqsúd is nikáh for which the clothes are being bought. The clothes are a support for the nikáh therefore the clothes become maqsúd also.

Do you understand?

The clothes are an aid – to the extent of necessity according to the Sharí'at – for the maqsúd of nikáh. How will the nikáh take place without the clothes? The aspect of maqsúd is different and the aspect of display is

different.

So, the clothes are not maqsúd in themselves. If the clothes are bought and just kept at home and not given to the bride and he then goes to buy more clothes and keeps these also at home, has the nikáh taken place? The buying is for the celebration of the nikáh. What does not form part of it, is not maqsúd and is of no assistance to what is maqsúd. It is laghú and lá-yání.

More aspects concerning wudhú and tahárat

If a person makes wudhú and just sits, not proceeding to perform namáz, then this act is laghú and lá-yání. The wudhú was for performing namáz, and it was not maqsúd in itself.

However, it is maqsúd for a mu'min to be in a state of tahárat (ceremonial purity). It may not be the time of namáz but the mu'min wants to keep himself in a state of tahárat. So, this desire to keep himself in a state of tahárat becomes maqsúd, even though the wudhú is not in the category of maqásid that it is maqsúd in itself. This tahárat of wudhú will be maqsúd because of tahárat.

The maqsúd is zínat (adornment). The purpose is to create zínat in the heart from the núr of ímán. A joyfulness should be created. There is a radiance in wudhú.

You can see this for yourself at any time: After having answered the call of nature and having relieved yourself, perform wudhú immediately. Your temperament will feel radiant. You will feel an openness within yourself. The next time, after relieving yourself, do not perform wudhú. Assess yourself in both situations and check your temperament in both conditions.

The literal meaning of "wudhú" is "radiance / openness". So, wudhú is not maqsúd in itself. It becomes maqsúd for the maqsúd of creating cheer and joyfulness in the temperament; to create the núr of ímán. That is why it is maqsúd. That is why the mu'min is performing wudhú even though it is not time for namáz. If he has the intention of performing namáz then wudhú becomes maqsúd.

If he remains without wudhú and he is not in a state of tahárat, it is

já'iz. The reason is that it is not fardh or wájib but it is mustahab, praiseworthy.

Rasúlulláh's صلى الله عليه وسلم action in staying with tahárat

The rúh is tayyib and táhir. It is a pure thing. When it leaves the body it should leave in a state of tahárat. Whoever has this thought in mind that the rúh should depart in a state of tahárat will keep himself all the time with wudhú. He may have not known this before but he will now know the following:

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, after having urinated and having made istinjá with a mud-clod and then having used water to make istinjá, proceeded to make tayyamum. A Sahábí رضى الله تعالى عنه mentioned: "There is water nearby – perform wudhú." Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم made an estimate and then said: "It would not be surprising that my rúh departs before I reach the water. My rúh will then have departed without tahárat. I desire that I make tayyamum and later on make wudhú."

In actual fact, the rúh of Nabí صلى الله عليه وسلم could not be taken by the angel without prior permission. He had such closeness (qurb) with Alláh Ta'álá that the angel had to have permission.

When the time came the angel was asked: "What have you come for?" The angel said: "This is my mission." "You have come to take my life? Does a loved one take the life of a loved one?"

The angel reported back: "He says: 'Does a loved one take the life of a loved one?'" The angel was told: "Say to him: 'Does a loved one evade meeting a loved one?'"

Does a loved one ever refuse to meet a loved one? Not at all. It is obvious that a loved one desires to meet a loved one. Here, for meeting the Loved One, Alláh Ta'álá, besides this conveyance of death there is no other conveyance one can use to traverse this Pul-Sirát. Embark on it. The meeting will take place:

اَلْمَوْتُ جَسْرٌ يُوْصِلُ الْحَبِيْبَ اِلَى الْحَبِيْبِ

Death is a bridge which allows the beloved to meet the beloved.

Just see: the rúh of Nabí صلى الله عليه وسلم does not depart without his permission.

Yet what is Huzúre-akram صلى الله عليه وسلم saying, taking into account that he was rúh personified? "It would not be surprising that my rúh departs before I reach the water. My rúh will then have departed without tahárat." That is why he performed tayyamum before he could reach the water.

So, those mu'minín who have heard this and it has settled in their hearts with talab, especially the ones who are tálib of isláh and those who are sálikín, there is absolutely no question of them remaining without wudhú.

Yes, if water is not available, or it is winter and hot water is not available, then one is helpless and excused (majbúr and ma'zúr). However, one will get thawáb for one's intention.

اِنَّمَاالْاَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ

Deeds depend on the intention

His intention was there; therefore he has attained intrinsic tahárat. What have you understood? His intention was internal purification. His intention was internal, so internal tahárat has also been achieved.

We had been speaking about wudhú: that it was not maqsúd in itself.

What is the purpose (maqsúd) of our life?

We have to see what the objective, the purpose of our lives is. We have to strive with eagerness, with enthusiasm, making an effort with openness, with heart and soul, in order to attain what is maqsúd in itself. We will have to strive and should strive. This is the demand of intelligence and the demand of a temperament and inborn nature that are balanced and sensible.

Whatever is not part of maqásid but is an aid to attain what is maqsúd, we have to strive for that as well. That will be included in the maqásid.

Have you grasped this? If you have understood, let us go to the next point: Alláh Ta'álá had sent this insán to this dunyá from the 'Álam-e-Mítháq with ímán, making him a mu'min. (As an aside, note that the individual did not ask for ímán but was given ímán.) Who was this mu'min who was sent? It was Hadhrat Ádam who was sent with his wife Hadhrat Hawwá عليهما السلام. Both were sent with ímán. They were not sent – Alláh protect us! – without

ímán. The whole of mankind was in the back of Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام. The whole of mankind was sent with ímán in the back of this mu'min. It was also shown to them what their maqsad was for their progress. Otherwise they could have been kept in Jannat.

Can you hear me?

Initially, they were kept in Jannat. There was no other place for them to be. Jannat had in it no difficulties – only comfort, happiness and everything else. They lived like the angels. All the angels are mu'min but they were not sent to stay on earth. Hadhrat Ádam عليه السلام was sent here. And the whole of insán mu'min was in his back.

They were told what the maqsad of being sent to earth was. By them staying in Jannat there was just no way of making progress. Jannat had comfort. It had cheer. They could stay there in great happiness. However, there was just no avenue for them to make progress.

The situation with the angels is such that they have no room for progress. Hadhrat Míká'íl عليه السلام could not change his status to that of Hadhrat Jibríl عليه السلام and vice versa. The portfolio of Hadhrat Isrá'íl عليه السلام could not be given to Hadhrat Jibríl عليه السلام and vice versa. This did not happen and it does not happen. In Jannat there is neither retrogression nor progress.

The position of insán is different from that of the angels. Insán was told that this is your maqsad. Insán was told: "Whatever orders or whatever else is sent down to you, you should keep on walking along in that direction. The ímán that has been given to you, with this ímán you carry on performing those tasks and deeds that will be sent to you. Then this ímán of yours will be a means of your progress, and your stages will keep on increasing."

This is the maqsad. Záte-Bárí-Ta'álá has shown His benevolence by giving this mu'min this maqsad, and not shown him a disfavour. It is a means of progress and not retrogression. Progress normally takes place with regard to position and rank. Obviously this is good and not evil.

It is a natural trait in the dunyá that each person desires that he attains a high position and rank. But even after doing a B.A. and M.A. a person has no choice. People complain: "Even with a B.A. and M.A. I cannot find employment, even after numerous applications." He is now overcome by anxiety, yet he cannot find employment. Some may and some may not.

However, Alláh Ta'álá Himself has said: "These are the tasks. If you keep on performing them, in the ímán that you previously had there will be a continuous increase in this ímán." Having stating these tasks, Alláh Ta'álá states:

لِيَزْدَادُوٓا إِيمَانًا مَّعَ إِيمَانِهِمْ

That they might add faith to their faith. (S.48.4.)

By performing these tasks, with the ímán that you previously had, your ímán will keep on increasing and progressing. This is the maqsad. So, should one adopt those measures that will be a means of an increase and progress in one's ímán or should one choose to cause retrogression?

So, what was the maqsúd for sending us into this world? It was to increase one's ímán. To achieve this there are some tasks to do, for which there are certain means and methods. This is an 'álame-asbáb – a world where means have to be adopted. This has been the maqsad.

Now, in this maqsad – the basic maqsúd – we have to look at what is ghair-maqsúd and check to see whether this which is ghair-maqsúd is of any aid and assistance in attaining the basic maqsúd or not.

The position of 'ilm

In this category is 'ilm. This 'ilm is not maqsúd in itself – it is maqsúd for attaining the basic maqsúd. It will assist in attaining what is maqsúd and cause an increase therein. What is this? This is 'ilm.

Which 'ilm?

This is that 'ilm that was revealed through wahí and which is a means of an increase in ímán. It is not western knowledge. Where will western knowledge be a means of an increase of ímán? To the contrary, there is a danger that it may be a means of becoming an impediment and an obstacle in attaining what is maqsúd. However, if this does not happen but it is an aid and assistance, then studying western knowledge is not harám in itself.

However, if western knowledge is not an aid and there is no benefit in ímán and if it causes harm, then is it halál or harám? And the harm is there.

And if a person was to study 'ilme-Arabí – the study of the Dín through

the Arabic syllabus – this is also maqsúd in increasing one's ímán – but the person does not attain an increase in his ímán then what has he achieved by studying 'ilme-Arabí-wahí-Shar'í?

Have you understood this point?

The basic maqsúd for attaining qurbe-iláhí is amal (practising). 'Ilme-wahí is an aid and assistance for attaining the basic maqsúd of amal. Examples have been given concerning wudhú, food and drink and nikáh. 'Ilm is similar in that the maqsúd of 'ilm is amal.

The following áyet was put before you:

لِيَزْدَادُوْٓا إِيْمَانًا مَّعَ إِيْمَانِهِمْ ۗ

That they might add faith to their faith. (S.48.4.)

At another place in the Qur'án Sharíf Alláh Ta'álá has stated, in regard to differences in status:

وَلِكُلٍّ دَرَجٰتٌ مِّمَّا عَمِلُوْا ۗ

For all there will be stages by virtue of what they did. (S.6.132.)

Note that the word used is "amilú" (what they did) and not "alimú" (what they studied). That is, for each there will be a stage according to their actions (a'mál). It is not stated that the stages will be according to their 'ilm. This has been proven.

A person may have 'ilm but it does not take him towards amal. The 'ilm has not become a means of taking him to that amal which is matlúb and maqsúd according to Alláh Ta'álá and the Sharí'at. So, what is the use?

To repeat: The words used are "mim-má amilú" and not "mim-má alimú".

Have you understood?

Another example of ghair-maqsúd becoming maqsúd

I had given you an example of bátin and of batan – that is, filling the stomach. Here is another example:

A person says: "I am feeling hungry." Somebody tells him: "So, if you are hungry, you should eat some food. Filling your stomach with food is the solution."

This person now goes to the bazár and he buys some firewood, a box of matches and some flour. This other person tells him: "Dear brother! Just now you were saying: 'I'm hungry.' And hunger does not go away without eating some food. What are you involved with now? You are busy buying wood and flour! Arè! Why are you occupying yourself with these tasks?" The hungry person will explain to him: "All this is maqsúd for the maqsúd of filling my stomach. If I do not purchase firewood and matches and flour, which are items necessary for making rotí, how will I fill my stomach?"

So, the items he purchased are means and methods for attaining the basic maqsúd of filling the stomach. Therefore, purchasing of these items has become maqsúd in order to reach the basic maqsúd.

So, what is an aid and assistance in attaining the basic maqsúd also becomes maqsúd. And what does not fit this category – it is not maqsúd in itself and it is not an aid and assistance to attaining the basic maqsúd – that is laghú; it is a lá-yání activity; it is lá-yání speech; and it is lá-yání work. Why have you made such statements in which there is no benefit? Why have you done such work in which there is no benefit?

The purpose of "travelling through the earth"

سِيرُوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ

Travel through the earth

At different places in the Qur'án Sharíf it is said: "Travel through the earth." This travelling is not maqsúd in itself. Then why has Alláh Ta'álá said: "Travel through the earth?"

This has been said for this reason that by travelling, by going different places, the natural phenomena created by Alláh Ta'álá may be witnessed and thereby it can be a means of an increase in ma'rifat of Záte-Bárí-Ta'álá. This travelling is for an increase in the ma'rifat of Záte-Bárí-Ta'álá by means of seeing the qudrat of Alláh Ta'álá in the wonders in nature. It is a means. The basic maqsad is ma'rifate-íláhí, the travelling being the means to attain this maqsad.

When a person has attained this ma'rifate-íláhí through travelling, then there is no more travelling for him. His maqsad has been attained. Travelling

is not for tafríh (diversion/ amusement/ entertainment).

The position of physical health and undertaking treatment

Yes, good health is matlúb in the eyes of Alláh Ta'álá. This means good physical health. Just as rúhání (good) health is matlúb so is physical (good) health matlúb. This physical health is not maqsúd in itself but it is maqsúd to maintain rúhání health.

In what way? Answer: If a person does not enjoy good physical health then how will he be able to carry out those a'mál which he has been commanded to carry out? So, in itself, physical health is not matlúb. However, good physical health is matlúb for the sake of ímání health, rúhání health, health of the heart and for correctness in a'mál.

Have you understood the issue?

Taking medication is not matlúb. In itself, taking medication is not maqsúd but the taking of medication becomes maqsúd because good health is maqsúd. In terms of the Sharí'at taking care of one's health is fardh. Does treatment result in good health?

By Huzúre-Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم undertaking treatment he showed: "I also take treatment." This was out of consideration for the general laws, for the general creation, especially the simple, unsophisticated mu'min ummat. It should not happen that by him not undertaking treatment at all what would happen to his ummate-muslimah? Additionally, they will be weaker. They will obtain strength through treatment which will also be consolation for their families.

Some actions of Nabí صلى الله عليه وسلم were for our benefit

Some actions were such that they were not necessary for Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم to carry out. These actions were not contrary to his position as a Nabí but it was in conformity with his station. These were carried out in consideration for his ummate-muslimah: "If I did not carry out these actions there would be those who would also not carry out these actions. Such individuals would also be found in my ummat." Thus, he also performed such tasks which were in conformity with nabúwat and not contrary to it. It was in consideration of his ummat.

And it was also for another reason. Arè bháí, what shall I say? In any case, it was also for this reason that he carried certain actions: "My ummat should consider me to be human; not consider me to be an angel as other communities had elevated their Ambiyá عليهم السلام to godhood. My ummat should not be able to do the same and elevate me to godhood."

Have other ummats done this or not? But nobody from his ummat ever said that Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم is Alláh.

Do you understand or not?

Huzúre-akram صلى الله عليه وسلم developed fever and he took medication. He suffered from headaches and a band was tied around his head. When his son passed away his grief was such that tears rolled out of his eyes. What was all this about? These were the demands of his humanness.

Such auliyá have existed in his ummat that no tears flowed from their eyes and their hearts felt no grief. Yes – no tears flowed from their eyes and their hearts did not grieve.

So, why was it that Huzúre-akram صلى الله عليه وسلم grieved? His condition was such that he had the awareness of Alláh Ta'álá all the time. His gaze was continuously on His wisdom and sagacity. So, why should he have grieved? Why should he have shed tears?

Do you understand?

There have been many such in his ummat who not only did not grieve but expressed happiness at death. Not only was there no grief but happiness was exhibited at the death of a son. How was this? Hadhratwálá mentioned a qissah.

This discourse is on the theme of "maqsúd". The maqsúd is radhá-e-iláhí – the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá – and taqarrub-e iláhí – closeness to Alláh Ta'álá. The means for attaining these are those a'mál which Záte-Bárí-Ta'álá has prescribed. This is the maqsad. Included in these a'mál is procreation – that is, nikáh, which is the means.

Qissah of the nikáh of a buzurg in the middle of the night

Hadhrat Mauláná Thánwí رحمة الله عليه related this to us:

One night one buzurg's eyes suddenly opened from sleep. The moment his eyes opened he raised a cry: "Is there anybody here? Is there anybody

around?"

His special attendant, who was sleeping nearby, woke up from sleep. "Huzúr! I am here. What is your command?" The buzurg said: "I want to get married. I want to make nikáh." The khádim said: "Very well. Huzúr, let morning come then, in-shá-Alláh, nikáh will take place." The buzurg exclaimed: "No! I will make nikáh now! I will do it now!" The khádim said: "Huzúr, now? Where will I go now? Who shall I ask? What do I do?" The buzurg was adamant: "Now! I will make nikáh now!" The "now" persisted.

The buzurg insisted that the nikáh takes place immediately. The khádim tried to find excuses, to no avail. When the khádim saw that the buzurg was very insistent, he said: "I have a daughter. She is of marriageable age. If huzúr finds it acceptable, I am at your service." The buzurg said: "Very well. I will get married now."

There were a few people in the khánqáh. For the nikáh to be valid there has to be the wakíl for the bride, proposal and acceptance, and at least two witnesses. Without at least two witnesses nikáh cannot take place. A nikáh taking place in secret is not valid. People say: "The two are happy so what can the qádhí do?" This is wrong. The nikáh will not be valid without two witnesses.

There were enough people in the khánqáh. They were woken up and were witnesses, and the nikáh took place. The bride went to the groom. They were now husband and wife.

In due course, a son was born. It is not that today the nikáh takes place and tomorrow a child is born! At the proper time a son was born. Arè mian! A boy was born but the child survived only a few days and passed away and kafan-dafan took place.

After a few days the buzurg told his wife: "You know my situation. I am a poor person. There is no adequate food and drink here. In all this time here you will have noticed everything. If you so wish, you may remain here with me. You know my position as far as food and drink and living conditions are concerned. So, if you so wish, you may stay under these conditions. Otherwise I am prepared to give you your freedom by issuing talláq."

The wife replied: "This is an amazing thing that you have said! At that

time that night you found it difficult even to wait for morning to come, such was your haste in making nikáh! And now you say that you are prepared to issue a talláq! What's the story? What is this all about?"

The buzurg said: "This is the story: I was sleeping that night when I had a dream. I saw the plain of Qiyámat. Everybody was in a state of nafsí-nafsí – each person was worried about his or her own reckoning. An order rang out against a mu'min bandah: 'Take him to Jahannam!' The angels caught hold of him and started dragging him towards Jahannam. Suddenly, a child appeared. The child said: 'This is my father! I will not allow you to take him!' The angels were trying to drag him to Jahannam and the child started tugging him towards Jannat crying: 'This is my father!' A tug-of war started. Just then Záte-Bárí-Ta'álá said: 'This child will not give in. The child will refuse to enter Jannat without taking the father with him. Go! I have also forgiven the father!' The father was saved!"

The buzurg continued: "Just then my eyes opened. The thought struck me that my deeds were of doubtful value. It would be a good thing if I got married and a child is born and the child then passes away, becoming a means for my forgiveness. That is why I got married."

Are you listening?

We get married so that there is a child. If there is one child then there should be another two. If there is a boy, then there should be two more.

I also get such letters that if there are two boys: "Ají, make du'á there we have a daughter as well." Such letters also come: "We have four girls. Make du'á that we have one or two boys as well." Such requests also come: "We have several boys but no girls. Ají, make du'á that we have a girl as well." I wrote back: "Are you saying this or is it most probably what the mother is saying?"

But, over there, with this buzurg, what do we see? A son is born and dies shortly thereafter. What does he say? "He should be a means of my forgiveness."

Do you see? There are such individuals in the ummat as well that, when a child passes away, there is no grief and no tears flowing from the eyes.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had tears in his eyes and he showed his grief as well and he also verbally expressed this. Ponder on this! If there were no

shedding of tears by him and he did not experience grief in his heart, what would have happened? The whole Muslim ummat is not like that buzurg. So, if people experienced grief and shed tears, as it normally happens, such thoughts would assail them: "This condition of mine is an indication of the weakness in my ímán."

So, now they have some consolation: "Huzúre-Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم also experienced grief and that he also shed tears from his blessed eyes. Therefore there is no deficiency in my ímán by my experiencing grief in my heart and shedding tears from my eyes upon the death of a child. Or for experiencing grief on any other occasion. It is not contrary to my ímán to shed tears because Huzúre-Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم also had tears in his eyes and he also experienced sadness."

Have you understood this?

The istighfár of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم

These were actions of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم that were not contrary to the station of Nabúwat yet he was seen to do them for the benefit of his ummate-muslimah. From this, understand the following as well. What is this? Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had no need to make istighfár because istighfár is made on occasions of sinning. Taubah and istighfár are made on committing sins.

To explain: Medical treatment is undertaken for bodily illnesses and not for a body that is sound and healthy. Sins are also illnesses. The remedy for this is taubah. It is istighfár.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم had no need to make taubah and istighfár because he was sinless. Being sinless, he was chaste, free of sins. However, despite this, he made istighfár. This is a big lesson for us. Where there is no need for istighfár and yet istighfár is made, then how much more are we not in need of making istighfár!

One should be careful of one's statements

From this we can see that no mu'min should at any time say: "Nowadays I am caught up with so many difficulties/ I am in such poverty/ I am so ill/ I have so many problems! I do not know what sin I committed that I am

apprehended. I just do not know what is the sin I committed."

By making this statement he is deluding himself that he committed just one sin for which he is being punished. Arè! From morning to night we are involved in many sins. However, Alláh Ta'álá is so magnanimous (karím) that He keeps on forgiving our sins without us even having made taubah! If He were to apprehend us on all the sins we commit, there would be nothing left of us!

So, Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم making istighfár is a lesson. For whom? It is for his ummate-muslimah: how can anyone be freed of making istighfár at any time?

Have you understood the issue?

So, what is our maqsúd? It is radhá-e-iláhí. And where is the location for radhá-e-iláhí? It is Jannat. It is in Jannat that there will be dídár – the vision of Alláh Ta'álá. To repeat: What is our basic maqsad? It is radhá-e-iláhí. And where is the location for radhá-e-iláhí? It is in the realm that will come after this world – that is, Jannat. And what is the basis (illat) for entrance to Jannat? It is ímán. And what is the means for progress and an increase in this ímán and in taqarrub? It is a'mál. That is, a'mál-e-sálihah – pious deeds. And these a'mál-e-sálihah have to be performed by avoiding what is forbidden – parhez from a'mál-e-mamnú'ah. The name for this is taqwá.

So, these are the means. These are the methods.

Let me put it this way: The basic maqsúd is radhá-e-iláhí. Its illat (basis) is ímán. If there is no ímán then there is just no question of gaining radhá-e-iláhí. There is just no question of entry into Jannat. Ímán is the illat. Now, the means and methods of increasing this illate-ímán are a'mál-e-sálihah. There should be no factors causing a lessening in performing these a'mál-e-sálihah, and this is achieved through taqwá.

The áyet has "ámanú" which is followed by "it-taqulláh". Those with ímán are addressed. So, ímán is present. Then, what is this "it-taqulláh"? It refers to another taqwá which is necessary to attain an increase in ímán. This is stated further on: "li-yaz dádú ímánan ma'a ímánihim."

Summary of the majlis

The basic maqsúd is matlúb – the basic objective is one's goal. And all that

which is not maqsúd in itself but which aid and assist in attaining what is maqsúd, will be dealt with in the same manner as the basic maqsúd, the reason being that attaining the basic maqsúd is dependent on it.

Du'á

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us the taufíq to keep our gaze focused on what is the basic maqsúd of our life and our self while we are in this world; this being the demands of one's ímán and intelligence, and also of a clear understanding (fehme-salím) and also the demands of a temperament that is salámat (sound). May Alláh Ta'álá grant us also the taufíq to abstain from those things which are an obstruction to attaining what is maqsúd. This is our basic existence.

May Alláh Ta'álá grant us also the taufíq to perform continuously and regularly correct a'mál-e-sálihah with taqwá and with ikhlás and with sidq. Ámín.

وَاٰخِرُ دَعْوَانَا اَنِ الْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ

Khudá háfiz.

SPECIAL ISSUE

Jamád-ul-Awwal 1417 – September 1996

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

FOREWORD

Our Hadhratjí, Hadhrat Mauláná Muhammad Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه, was so engrossed in his studies while studying in the Dárul Ulúm in Deoband that afterwards he could not recall who even his roommates were. Yes, Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه did remember one person from his student days in Deoband. This was Hadhrat Mufti Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib Gangohí رحمة الله عليه. It was during that period that a special bond developed between the two. After completing their studies the paths of the two separated. Hadhrat Mauláná Masíhulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه went to Jalálábád, and Hadhrat Mufti

Mahmúd Sáhib رحمة الله عليه went to Sahâranpur. However, the bond between the two remained, and contact was maintained to the very end when Hadhratjí رحمة الله عليه passed away in 1992.

Many of us who were connected to Hadhratjí, Mauláná Masíhulláh Khán Sáhib رحمة الله عليه, found ourselves completely at home in the company of Hadhrat Mufti Mahmúd Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. Hadhrat Mufti Mahmúd Sáhib رحمة الله عليه also honoured us by accepting invitations and visited our homes, these occasions being dearly treasured by us!

The passing away of Hadhrat Mufti Mahmúd Sáhib رحمة الله عليه is a great loss to the ummah, and especially to those who had come to know him. In our own small way, we also wish to pay tribute to him. May Alláh Ta'álá accept this publication of a wáz delivered by Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه as a token of our gratitude; and may Alláh Ta'álá bless Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه with high stages in the ákhirat. Ámín.

Dr. I.M.

[This is a translation of a wáz that Hadhrat Mufti Mahmúdul-Hasan Sáhib Gangohí رحمة الله عليه delivered in the month of Ramadhán 1406. The venue was the Jámi'ah I - lámiyah Ta'límuddín Masjid in Dabhel, Gujarat, India, where Hadhrat Mufti Mahmúd Sáhib رحمة الله عليه spent the whole month in i'tikáf.

Note: This wáz has been taken from the numerous published works of Hadhrat Mufti Mahmúd Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. This is not a word-for-word translation but, where necessary, there has been some paraphrasing for ease of reading.]

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدَهٗ وَنُصَلِّيْ عَلٰى رَسُوْلِهِ الْكَرِيْمِ

THE BENEFITS OF SOHBAT

It has been stated in the Hadíth Sharíf that some sahábah رحمة الله عليه came in the khidmat of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم and said: "Huzúr صلى الله عليه وسلم,

whenever we are in your majlis, it appears as if Jannat and Dozakh are directly in front of us. And when we leave from here, and we busy ourselves with our families – our wives and children – then that state does not remain that we had attained through your mubárak sohbat."

This change was such that some sahábah رحمة الله عليه started having doubts concerning this altering state of theirs, that it may be a sign of hypocrisy (nifáq). Was this changing attitude not the condition of the munáfiqín: sometimes one attitude, at another time the opposite attitude; inside one thing, and externally something else?

The sahábah رحمة الله عليه were such that the solutions to everything that bothered them they sought directly from Nabí Kareem صلى الله عليه وسلم. That is why they placed these thoughts in front of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم replied to them: "This state of yours that you develop while you are in my majlis, if it were to remain with you all the time, then the malá'ikah would be making musáfahah with you in the streets. However, this happens only occasionally, not all the time."

A human being, because he lives in this material world, feels the effect of the influences of the environment, and the condition (kaifiyet) of his heart continuously alters. That is why there is a tremendous need to be in the sohbat of a kámil sheikh.

Ramadhán is a special month

This month of Ramadhán especially is such that Alláh Ta'álá has saved us from another environment. It is as if Alláh Ta'álá is saying: "O My bandah! Where are you tramping around with your farming? Come hither to My door! O My bandah! Why are you rooted to your shop busy buying and selling? Come hither to my Royal court, to the masjid! O My bandah! Why are you busy mending shoes and sewing clothes? Come hither! Free yourself from everything and come to My door!"

Haqq Ta'álá has summoned us here in order to shower us with gifts. He has called us so that our sins may be forgiven. He has called us for the isláh of our hearts and states (ahwál).

Rather this than to sit in our shops and factories getting involved in throwing abuse at one another and to be involved in making ghíbat and

in fault-finding.

Here there is tiláwat of the Qur'án Sharíf; the name of Alláh Ta'álá is here; tasbíh is here; Durúd Sharíf is here; istighfár is here; nawáfil 'ibádat is here. What a great favour has Alláh Ta'álá not bestowed on us that He has Himself invited us to Him as special guests!

Alláh Ta'álá has chained up the Shayátín. These were the ones that troubled and molested us the whole year through. They are the ones that showed us and taught us varying types of sins. Alláh Ta'álá has saved us from these. And the schemes and mischief of the Shayátín are such that to detect them is not within the capacity of every one. They cause a tremendous amount of grief and trouble. But the Shayátín are terrified of the mashá'ikh, and they flee from them!

Shayátín flee from the ahlulláh

Mauláná Abdul Qádir Raipuri Sáhib رحمة الله عليه narrated the following incident:

"When Hadhrat Sháh Abdur-Rahím Sáhib رحمة الله عليه used to come to Raipur, everyone used to emerge from their rooms at about eight or nine o'clock and a majlis used to take place.

"One day, as usual, Hadhrat Sháh Abdur-Rahím Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was sitting in readiness for the majlis. As Hadhrat Mauláná Alláhbakhsh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه came out of his room to attend the majlis Hadhrat Sháh Abdur-Rahím Sáhib's رحمة الله عليه gaze fell on him, and he said: 'Come here. Come sit by me.' Hadhrat Mauláná Alláhbakhsh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه went and sat there.

"Afterwards," Mauláná Abdul Qádir Raipuri Sáhib رحمة الله عليه continued, "I went up to Hadhrat Mauláná Alláhbakhsh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه and enquired: 'Hadhrat, what was the reason that this morning you were called with special care and consideration by Hadhrat Sháh Abdur-Rahím Sáhib رحمة الله عليه?' He replied: 'What shall I say? What had happened was this: This morning I woke up at two o'clock. From that time onwards a voice started resounding persistently in my heart, saying: "Inní anallah! Inní anallah!" (Verily! I am Alláh! Verily! I am Alláh!) I tried to dispel the voice by making countless zikr with dharb. I tried other methods, but the voice would not cease till the morning! But the moment Hadhrat's eyes fell on me and he

told me to go and sit next to him, immediately the voice stopped!'"

Those features that are unattainable after years and years of mujáhadah, Alláh Ta'álá grants these very quickly by one sitting with such men of status.

Hadhrat Mauláná Anwar Sháh Kashmiri رحمة الله عليه and Dr. Iqbál Sáhib

Once Hadhrat Mauláná Anwar Sháh Kashmiri رحمة الله عليه went to Lahore, in Pakistan. He stayed there for some time. He had many students there. They started coming to him.

Dr. Iqbál Sáhib, the poet, was alive at that time. Some friends of his suggested that he should also go and meet Hadhrat Mauláná Anwar Sháh Kashmiri رحمة الله عليه. Dr. Iqbál Sáhib was not mu'taqid of any 'álim – he had no faith and confidence in any of the 'ulemá. So, he never went.

Then some close friend rebuked him: "You dash around all over the world, so what harm can there be in your going there?" It sunk home. "You have a point," Dr. Iqbál Sáhib replied. And he went and sat in Hadhrat Mauláná Anwar Sháh Kashmiri's رحمة الله عليه majlis.

As he sat, his mind immediately raced to that Hadíth Sharíf wherein the sahábah رحمة الله عليه related that the khuddám and sahábah رحمة الله عليه sat in Rasúlulláh's صلى الله عليه وسلم majlis in such tranquillity as if birds were sitting on their heads and the slightest movement would cause them to fly away.

In other words, this is the dignity and respect with which the sahábah رحمة الله عليه would sit. It was not a situation where one person would turn and look this side and another would turn and look that side. This was not their condition. No. They sat with great dignity and serenity.

To continue: When Dr. Iqbál Sáhib sat in the majlis of Hadhrat Mauláná Anwar Sháh Kashmiri Sáhib رحمة الله عليه, immediately the thought came into his mind that this must have been the quality of the majlis of Nabí Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم.

Those attending the majlis were putting forth various questions to Hadhrat Mauláná Anwar Sháh Kashmiri Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه answered with ease, and his answers had tremendous depth to them. He used to reply in this manner: "Such and such a person has written this incorrectly, and his fallacy arises because of what has been written in

such and such a kitáb. In another kitáb this very point has been discussed in another manner. My understanding is that the real answer is not as he has stated but is thus...”

In this way Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه kept on quoting detailed references ad lib. It is for this reason that it has been said Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was a walking library! His memory was phenomenal and his brain housed virtually a complete and accurate library!

Dr. Iqbál Sáhib listened attentively to all the answers Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه gave. When the next majlis took place, Dr. Iqbál Sáhib was back! During this majlis the topic of “hudúthe-álam” (the created nature of the universe) cropped up, and Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه recited a qasídah that he had composed on the subject, entitled: “Dharbil-khátim alá hudúthe-álam”.

Hearing this poem Dr. Iqbál Sáhib did some re-thinking: “Oho! He appears to be some learned person!” Dr. Iqbál Sáhib himself was a distinguished poet. He himself now started putting forth questions.

Dr. Iqbál Sáhib asked Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه: “What is Time? What is Space?” Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه gave his replies. Dr. Iqbál Sáhib then said: “Newton has written thus.”

Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه replied: “Whatever Newton has written on this topic he took from the treatise of Allámah Iráqí. And this is plagiarism, in that he did not cite Allámah Iráqí as the source of these ideas, but passed off these ideas as his own.”

Dr. Iqbál Sáhib asked: “Who is Allámah Iráqí and where is his treatise?”

Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه replied: “Allámah Iráqí’s treatise I have with me in Deoband.” The treatise was forwarded to Dr. Iqbál Sáhib later on.

Dr. Iqbál Sáhib placed questions to Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه on several other topics. To issues that were intricate and involved Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه gave very satisfying replies, and Dr. Iqbál Sáhib became endeared to Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه.

When Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه saw that Dr. Iqbál Sáhib’s heart had been won over, Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه said: “Doctor Sáhib, I am not pleased with you!” The reason was that Dr. Iqbál Sáhib was the secretary of the Ahmedy group of Ghulám Ahmed Ghulám, and Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib

رحمة الله عليه was extremely furious with Ghulám Ahmed Ghulám. Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was filled with revulsion because he had attacked the sacred personalities of the Ambiyá عáíا همáسáام. He had called them absolutely lazy, and had pronounced his own superiority over them, as is evidenced by this couplet:

Stop mentioning Ibne Maryam
Better than him is Ghulám Ahmed

Such were the claims of Ghulám Ahmed Ghulám. He denied the finality of the prophethood of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. He himself claimed prophethood, etc., etc. That is why Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was absolutely furious with him

Dr. Iqbál Sáhib understood. He got up and left and went in to give his resignation. He made taubah. After making taubah he presented himself again to Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه, and said: "Hadhrat, that thorn that had been irritating, I have removed it!"

Now Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه turned his full attention on Dr. Iqbál Sáhib, as a result of which Dr. Iqbál Sáhib attained that special "something" in his heart, that unique "something" with which the heart had been unacquainted all this time!

He did not have the faintest notion that such a "thing" could also reside in a person's heart. His heart throbbed and these lines flowed from him:

The extinguished lamp can be set aflame.

O Lord! What is not filled in the hearts of the "Ahle-Dil"?
Do not ask these with tattered garments;
If you have the desire, go and look at them.
With blazingly radiant hands in their sleeves they sit.
If you yearn for a heart torn with grief,
Then serve those who are faqír.
You will not obtain such jewels from the treasuries of the kings!

From then onwards Dr. Iqbál Sáhib's poetry changed course. It turned around completely. Before that one did not know what he wrote, but now he commenced writing in the style of Mauláná Rúm رحمة الله عليه, and he used to speak mainly on his works as well.

Whatever his condition may be, however, from his poetic works he shows

that he had a very intense and deep attachment to the sacred personality of Hadhrat Nabí Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم. He had great love for him, an intense passion ('ishq).

He wrote a quatrain in Persian:

O Pure Being! You are full of abundance, without want, Independent. I am poor, in need and dependent. On the Day of Hashr accept my excuses for the sins and wrongs I have committed. And if You find it really necessary to take me to task, then do so, concealing me from the gaze of Mustafá صلى الله عليه وسلم*. Do not reveal my (sins and punishment) to Rasúlulláh* صلى الله عليه وسلم*, so that he should not be ashamed to see that individuals from his ummat are being taken to task in this way.*

Dr. Iqbál Sáhib used to compose very lofty poetry.

So, how did this change come into him? This revolution occurred through being in the sohbat of Hadhrat Mauláná Anwar Sháh Kashmiri Sáhib رحمة الله عليه.

Alas! Nowadays, as for this sohbat, which is very necessary, nobody is availing himself of it People do not even consider it necessary and therefore they lose out – they are the unfortunate, deprived.

Adab and muhabbat for one's sheikh

Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه had within him an immense degree of adab and respect, as seen by his behaviour towards his sheikh (and ustád), Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind Mahmúdul-Hasan رحمة الله عليه.

After his return from Malta (where he had been imprisoned by the British) Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه returned to Deoband. Here, after the Fajr namáz, a majlis used to take place at his house. The gathering consisted only of 'ulemá.

They used to have discussions amongst themselves. Sometimes Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه used to comment on some topic. However Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه used to remain silent throughout. He used to sit as one sits in the tasha-hud position, with head bowed down. When the majlis ended, everyone used to get up and depart silently.

Then Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه would himself say: "Sháh Sáhib, do you wish to ask anything?"

Then, lifting his head, Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه would reply: "Hadhrat, I wish to enquire concerning such and such a Hadíth."

He himself would not put forward a question, but only did so on the request of Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه.

Others used to speak amongst themselves during that majlis, but Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه did not participate in any of these discussions. He directed his attention solely towards his sheikh.

At the time that Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه was departing from India – he was arrested again and was to be imprisoned again in Malta – people started discussing the issue: Who was going to be the head (sadr mudarris) of educational programme of the Dárul Ulúm here? The speculations increased till finally word got to the ears of Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه. He stated: "With Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه being present here, why is it that this question should arise?"

Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind's رحمة الله عليه stature was such, his personality was so lofty, that one sentence was sufficient to silence everybody. Finally, it was Hadhrat Mauláná Anwar Sháh Kashmiri Sáhib رحمة الله عليه who was appointed to this post.

Another episode:

Hadhrat Mauláná Anwar Sháh Kashmiri Sáhib رحمة الله عليه proceeded to the lecture room to give a lesson from Tirmidhí Sharíf. He sat down and opened the kitáb. The text was read out. The students waited but Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was silent. Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind's رحمة الله عليه impending departure had struck such a blow to his heart that not a single word would come to his lips! He closed the kitáb and proceeded to the house of Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه.

Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه was sitting on the chárpáí with his feet hanging down. Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه went to sit at his feet and clutched Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind's رحمة الله عليه legs to his chest, and started weeping uncontrollably. This very Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه who was normally so reserved that he hardly spoke a word in the presence of his sheikh, was so beside himself with grief that this was his unexpected action.

Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه also did not adopt any norm of formality, and merely said: "Fine. Let him weep."

When the passion of Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib's رحمة الله عليه weeping cooled Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind رحمة الله عليه placed an affectionate hand on his head, and said: "Sháh Sáhib, because of my presence here you have been troubled with many doubts. When I am not here any longer, these doubts will not arise. If any doubts do arise then Qudrat itself will guide you. Go. I leave you in the care and protection of Alláh Ta'álá."

These hadharát, these luminaries, how much feelings did they not have in their hearts for their asátizah! These qualities have ceased to exist nowadays.

Another episode:

Hadhrat Mauláná Khalil Ahmed Sáhib رحمة الله عليه used to travel frequently from Saháranpur to Deoband in order to avail himself of the facilities of the library in Deoband. If he saw that the library was open, he used to go straight in, look at whichever kitábs he required to look at, make the necessary notes and then return. And if the library was closed, he used to go to the caretaker of the library, obtain the key from him and proceed with his work.

If there was time and if, on completing his work, the departure time of the train back to Saháranpur was such as to allow it, he would also meet some people.

Once, after completing his work in the library and still having time to spare, he went to meet Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه in his room. Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib's رحمة الله عليه room was situated just at the landing as one climbed the stairs. Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه saw Hadhrat Mauláná Khalil Ahmed Sáhib رحمة الله عليه approaching and immediately ran forward barefoot to receive him.

Hadhrat Mauláná Khalil Ahmed Sáhib رحمة الله عليه chided him: "Bháí Sháh Sáhib, what need for all this formality? I was coming to you. It is not befitting that you should run barefoot to receive me." But Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه paid no attention and, taking Hadhrat's hands, led him into his room.

In the room were some special students who were allowed to stay with Hadhrat Sháh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. He made a sign to them and they left the room. There were some masá'il to be discussed in privacy. The discussion took place and Hadhrat Mauláná Khalil Ahmed Sáhib رحمة الله عليه thereafter returned to Sahárapur.

Let us go back to the subject of the importance of sohbat:

Qissah concerning Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh رحمة الله عليه

Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was residing in Gangoh. He had studied in Sahárapur and he had also taught there subsequently. He was bai'at to Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. At the time that his sheikh was imprisoned in Malta Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه passed through a strange phase.

One day, while he was busy with his zikr and shaghl, suddenly the urge came into him to commit suicide. He lifted up a knife and surreptitiously glanced at the well outside (as if unable to decide what would be better), but at the same time he was also an 'álim – he knew that to take one's own life was haram. Under the circumstances neither the knife nor the well could solve his predicament. And his sheikh was not there to consult with – he was in Malta!

Wondering what to do he thought of Hadhrat Mauláná Khalil Ahmed Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. He was the first (and senior) khalífah of Hadhrat Mauláná Rashid Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه. Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه wrote him a letter in which he wrote the condition he was in. He ended with a plea: "This is my state. Please assist me!"

Hadhrat Mauláná Khalil Ahmed Sáhib رحمة الله عليه replied: "I am amazed! Why have you thought me capable of such a gigantic task? I am not qualified for such a task!"

Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was in a quandary. He decided to travel to Thánah Bhawan to seek the assistance of Hadhrat Thánwí Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. He travelled from Mírath to Sahárapur in order to catch the train from there to Thánah Bhawan. However, he missed the train. He decided to go to the madrasah Mazáharul-'Ulúm to await the next train. At the madrasah he went to meet Hadhrat Mauláná Khalil Ahmed Sáhib رحمة الله

عليه, who embraced him and had him seated. There were other people also present and Hadhrat did not say anything to Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. When everybody else had left Hadhrat said: “What had you written? It is amazing that such a learned person like yourself should have such expectations from me. Where am I qualified for such a task?”

Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه said: “Hadhrat, if anybody were to state that you are not qualified for the task, then it is no criticism of you but it is a criticism of Hadhrate-álí, Hadhrat Mauláná Rashid Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه, that why did he bestow you with the mantle of khiláfat? What, was it his habit to grant khiláfat to unqualified persons? And the very door through which you have attained all that you have, I have also been reared there. That is why I have a claim over you.”

Hadhrat Mauláná Khalil Ahmed Sáhib رحمة الله عليه, on hearing this, remained silent for a while (as if pondering carefully the remarks directed at him). Then Hadhrat said simply: “Stay over.” Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه thus stayed over.

That evening after Ishá, just before Hadhrat Mauláná Khalil Ahmed Sáhib رحمة الله عليه left for home, he indicated to Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه how to recite the “Bárah Tasbíh”, with some modifications, and instructed him: “In the last part of the night, go and sit in the room above the guest-room, and make this zikr loudly, so that your voice reaches my house.” Hadhrat’s house was very close-by.

Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه said: “Hadhrat, I am unable to make zikr and shaghl. Liberate me from that condition which caused me to have no desire to live, so that I may also involve myself in studying and teaching.”

Hadhrat Mauláná Khalil Ahmed Sáhib رحمة الله عليه reassured him: “Have no fear. Whatever you have been doing, keep on doing. Once a person also came to our Hadhrat Gangohí رحمة الله عليه suffering from the same ailment that you have. Our Hadhrat رحمة الله عليه gave him the same set of instructions.” This he added to further reassure him by giving him the source of the prescription. Thereafter Hadhrat went home.

As per instructions, Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه got up in the last part of the night and commenced his zikr.

Hadhrat Mauláná Khalil Ahmed Sáhib’s رحمة الله عليه routine was that he arrived at the madrasah at the time of subh-sádiq. For a while he used to sit silently in muráqabah. Then Fajr namáz used to be performed. This morning as well Hadhrat kept to this routine. After the Fajr namáz Hadhrat asked Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه: “How do you feel now?”

“I now have sukún – I am feeling at ease. That urge that I had, is no longer there.”

Hadhrat said: “Very good. Come and sit here.” Hadhrat got him to sit outside his room directly in front of his door, while Hadhrat himself went into his room and shut the door.

This is the manner in which Hadhrat Mauláná Kifáyatulláh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه afterwards described what happened: “I did not know what Hadhrat was sitting and doing inside his room. However, suddenly I experienced something: It was as if my heart had been gashed open. The wound lay open, and Hadhrat was sitting and massaging my heart, and Hadhrat’s massaging was causing bloody and purulent material to pour forth. I became startled and opened my eyes. I looked around. Hadhrat was nowhere to be seen, and the door to his room was still firmly closed! The same thing happened again and continued right up till the time of Ishráq. Hadhrat normally came out of his room after having performed Ishráq namáz. When he came out of his room, he enquired from me: ‘What is your condition now?’ I replied: ‘I have complete itminán now – I am experiencing complete peace.’

“Hadhrat said: ‘Very well. Come with me.’ I accompanied Hadhrat to his class. He made me sit there whilst he gave a lesson from Bukhárí Sharíf. The anwár and barakah – the spiritual radiance and effulgence – that I experienced there I have never experienced anywhere else. My heart floundered around in spiritual light! I desired that Hadhrat should give a very long lecture, but Hadhrat’s habit was to lecture very briefly. I, therefore, started throwing questions at Hadhrat, whatever came to mind, all topsy-turvy, in order to lengthen the session. Hadhrat replied, sometimes giving several different aspects to the one query. At times, having given a reply, he would add: ‘Do not search for this reply in any kitáb. The source is not to be found in any kitáb.’ At times, after having answered a query, he himself would add: ‘On this reply another question arises, but the commentators

have not dealt with it.' Hadhrat would then pose the question and give its reply as well.

"This is the manner in which the lesson proceeded. I felt greatly contented.

"Afterwards I said: 'Hadhrat, I had originally intended to go to Thánah Bhawan.' Hadhrat said: 'Definitely, you should go. However, on your return stay over one more night here. There is still some defect remaining.'

"I was puzzled as to what defect could still be remaining. In any case, on my return I stayed over again in Saháranpur for another two days. The defect that I was not even aware of was very forcefully brought to my notice! Again, in the morning after Fajr I was made to sit in muráqabah in front of the door outside Hadhrat's room. This time I experienced that 'something' was being filled into my heart. This 'something' produced strength and power in my heart. It brought cheer and happiness to my heart. I realised that during the first visit all the filth had been removed, and on this second visit strength and power was being instilled.

"When Hadhrat came out he said: 'Now, inshá-Alláh Ta'álá, there is both peace and tranquillity. Now you are free to leave.'"

All these are the blessings of sohbat. This task cannot be performed by a medical doctor. For this, sohbat is essential.

In reality, originally the sahábah رحمة الله عليه were the ones who sat in the sohbat of Huzúr Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم; and the tábi'ín sat in the sohbat of the sahábah رحمة الله عليه; and the tabe-tábi'ín sat in the sohbat of the tábi'ín. This silsilah, this chain, has come to us in this way.

Problem solving through sohbat

Major problems and complicated issues get solved through sohbat.

Hadhrat Thánwí رحمة الله عليه used to say: "Whenever I was assailed with doubts and uncertainties I used to go to Gangoh to Hadhrat Mauláná Rashid Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه. However it never came to pass that I actually had to voice my doubts and uncertainties. Without asking, they used to get solved!

"Sometimes it happened that the questions I had in mind, somebody else would put these forward! The answer that Hadhrat Gangohí رحمة الله عليه would give would also dispel the doubts I had. At times it would happen that

Hadhrat Gangohí رحمة الله عليه himself would start discussing a topic and during the discussion, without me saying a word, the answer to my doubt would also crop up! And sometimes it happened that no word was spoken at all – merely by sitting in the majlis the solutions would flash into my mind!

"Once I actually put one or two questions to Hadhrat Gangohí رحمة الله عليه. Hadhrat asked: 'Who is the person asking?' I replied: 'Ashraf Ali.' Hadhrat gave no reply. Neither did he say: 'You want an answer to such simple and straight-forward matters?' Nor did he say: 'The answer to these are very difficult.' Nor did he say: 'Ask another time.' Nothing! He adopted complete and absolute silence! However, the manner in which those two questions got solved during that period of silence, I now realise could never have been solved as lucidly by Hadhrat giving a lecture!"

Faiz: transmission and obstacles

What was, or is, the secret behind all this?

The reality behind this is that the original source from where faiz (spiritual blessings) flows is Alláh Ta'álá, and this faiz is showered on the heart of the sheikh. This faiz then radiates to those sitting in his company, provided that there is munásabat, provided that there is aqídat, provided that the heart does not harbour doubts and misgivings. If there are doubts and misgivings or ill-feelings faiz will not be attained. If these are not present, and the heart is clean towards the sheikh, then faiz will be attained.

The original endower of the faiz is Záte Bárí Ta'álá. The mashá'ikh are the intermediaries.

Take this example: There is a roof that has been constructed of marble stone. The rain that falls on this marble will be as pure as the rain that falls from the heavens. The marble roof has an outlet pipe. Whoever comes to stand under this outlet pipe, will derive the benefit of the rain water flowing from the outlet pipe. The water is not produced in the outlet pipe – the water rains from the heavens, and the pipe is the means. It is necessary to have some contact with this pipe to derive benefit.

Let us go a step further: If somebody were to push some dirt and filth up the outlet pipe (or the pipe or container that is attached to the outlet pipe has dust and filth in it) then the water flowing through will become

contaminated and will be impure and of no use. This water did not descend from the heavens in this impure state – it rained from the heavens in a clean and pure state – but in-between it became contaminated, where the outlet had been filled with dust and filth, and that is why it has flowed out impure and spoilt.

This explains the concept of faiz. This will enable you to understand the status of a sheikh – that is, if the sheikh is a true sheikh – haqíqí, kámil, árif! – then there will be faiz descending on him from Haqq Ta'álá, and this faiz will be absolutely pure.

Yes, if the muríd has no aqídat in him, he harbours suspicions (bid-gumání), he is critical of the sheikh's statements and actions, he finds fault with him, then the sheikh will definitely feel the effects of all these.

And when there is disquietude and displeasure (takaddur) in the sheikh's heart then no faiz is attained because of the disturbed condition of his heart.

This is borne out by a Hadíth Sharíf as well:

Hadhrat Wahshí رحمة الله عليه had (before accepting Islám) made Hadhrat Hamzah رحمة الله عليه shahíd at the Battle of Uhud, and had horribly mutilated the body – cutting up his heart and liver, cutting off his ears and nose. However, after the Conquest of Makkah Hadhrat Wahshí رحمة الله عليه brought ímán and took bai'at. Huzúr Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم asked him: "Are you able to do this that you do not bring your face in front of me?"

The reason for this request was that Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم, on seeing Hadhrat Wahshí رحمة الله عليه, was reminded of the cruel way in which his beloved uncle had been dealt with. Rasúlulláh's صلى الله عليه وسلم grief was renewed. He became concerned that if this was going to repeat itself every time that Hadhrat Wahshí رحمة الله عليه came in his presence, that the grief of his uncle would come back afresh, then Hadhrat Wahshí رحمة الله عليه would be deprived of any faiz. Faiz does not transmit if there is any takaddur. That is why this remedy was prescribed for him, that he should not come in the presence of Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم. If he was not present the grief would not return.

Yes, because of the ímání ta'alluq – that connection that existed because of ímán – faiz would be attained from a distance as well, as much as was written in his taqdír. That is why this procedure was prescribed for him.

It was the habit of the munáfiqín (hypocrites) that they would relay to Huzúr Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم their grievances against the sincere sahábah رحمة الله عليه. Huzúr Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم told them: "Do not bring any complaints concerning my sahábah رحمة الله عليه to me. I desire that when I approach my sahábah رحمة الله عليه I do so with a clean and affable heart. There should be no dirt or disquietude in my heart."

That is what Nabí Akram صلى الله عليه وسلم desired. Those mashá'ikh who are of the Ahle-Haqq, who are on this taríq, they similarly desire that in their hearts there should be absolutely no disquietude or cloudiness towards any of their muríds and devotees, so that the correct faiz should reach them. If there is takaddur there will be no transmission of faiz. Misery will be the result. If the heart of the tálib is clouded, then also misery will result.

That is why it is necessary that both their hearts be clear. It is necessary that both their hearts be connected – there should be congeniality. If this is present then benefits will accrue rapidly. Abundant faiz will be attained.

Our predecessors were people of great stature, with strong and influential personalities. Hadhrat Sheikh Jaláluddín Thánserí Sáhib رحمة الله عليه became bai'at to Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohí رحمة الله عليه. He then wrote the condition he was in to his sheikh. Shah Hadhrat Abdul Quddus Gangohí رحمة الله عليه wrote back in reply: "Even though there is some delay (in reaching your destination), however, the deer has come into the grasp of the lion."

Taking the example of physical strength, of that of a strong person, who will grasp the hand of a much weaker person, twist it around, and push it flat to the ground in a hand-wrestling match, the stronger person being skilled in the art. So also with the bátiní forces.

Shaitán has a strangling grasp over the strength of the obstinate and rebellious nafse-ammárah. To overcome this force one requires a stronger force. If the sheikh has within him sufficient bátiní power, then he will overcome these opposing bátiní forces and the isláh of the tálib will be made and the benefit will be tremendous.

But if the poor sheikh himself is weak, then may Alláh Ta'álá have mercy on his state! And may He have mercy also on the tálib! Both are in dire need of mercy!

[Below is reproduced the "Commemorative Issue of 'Jawaahiru Faqíhil Ummah,'" dated September 1996 – Rabí-'uth Thání 1417, Vol. 1 Issue 9. "Jawaahiru-Faqíhil-Ummah" is compiled and published by Hadhrat Muftí Muhammad Sa'eed Motara Sáhib دامت برکاته of Azaadville.]

بِسْمِ اللَّـهِ الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

AN OVERVIEW OF THE LIFE OF HADHRAT MUFTÍ SÁHIB رحمة الله عليه

Alláh Subhánahú-wa-Ta'álá blessed the Muslim Ummah with this illustrious son of Islám, who was born on the 9th of Jamád-uth-Tháníah 1325 A.H. in Gangoh, District Saháranpur, U.P. India – exactly two years after the demise of Hadhrat Mauláná Rashid Ahmed Gangohí رحمة الله عليه. Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib's رحمة الله عليه father, Hadhrat Mauláná Hamíd Hassan Sáhib رحمة الله عليه who had studied in Delhi and Deoband under the tutorship of Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hind Sáhib رحمة الله عليه led a very ascetic life, making do with simple food, attire and living quarters.

Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه would say, while reminiscing about his father: "My father would save about half a rotí from his supper. In the morning he would break this rotí into tiny pieces, immerse the pieces in water to soften them, then consume them with salt or sugar sprinkled on them. This was all that his breakfast consisted of, as he never used to drink tea."

Having been brought up in such a humble household, Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib حمة الله عليه himself too, led a very simple and disciplined life, far removed from the luxuries of the rich and famous.

Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه first learnt the Qur'án Sharíf under the supervision of a blind ustád, Háfiz Karím Bakhsh Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه became a very proficient Háfiz and Qárí, one whose tongue would be constantly engaged in the tiláwat of the Holy Qur'án Sharíf. After memorising the Qur'án Sharíf, Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه went on to study Arabic under his father. Hadhrat then went to the

madrasah Mazáharul-’Ulúm in Saháranpur in 1341 A.H., where Hadhrat formally began the ’álim course. In 1348 A.H. Hadhrat went to the dárul-’ulúm in Deoband, where he studied Hadíth Sharíf under the wing of luminaries such as Hadhrat Mauláná Husain Ahmed Madaní Sáhib رحمة الله عليه and other great asátizah of the time. Hadhrat qualified from Deoband, but then went back to Saháranpur to further study Hadíth Sharíf under great ’ulemá of the calibre of Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hadíth Mauláná Zakariyyah Sáhib رحمة الله عليه, Hadhrat Mauláná Manzúr Ahmed Sáhib رحمة الله عليه and Hadhrat Mauláná Abdur Rahmán Sáhib Kámilpurí رحمة الله عليه. After having completed his studies Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was appointed Assistant Mufti of Mazáharul-’Ulúm in Saháranpur. In 1353 A.H. Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was promoted to the post of Deputy Mufti, a post which he retained till 1370 A.H. Together with his responsibilities if issuing fatáwá, Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه also taught various kitábs, such as Hidáyah (fiqh), Jalálain (tafsír), etc.

Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib’s رحمة الله عليه life of Sunnah and abstention from the dunyá

Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم has said:

He who loves my Sunnah, has indeed shown love for me and he who loves me shall be in my company in Jannah.

Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was the epitome of the Sunnah in our era. Apart from emulating Rasúlulláh صلى الله عليه وسلم in his every action, Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was also a living example of the Sunnah as far as abstention from the dunyá was concerned. Thus, we find that, apart from a few years during his initial teaching years, Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه taught and rendered Díní services without any remuneration, till the end of his noble life. There were times when he was compelled by the madrasah authorities to accept a salary, but he would immediately re-donate it to the madrasah.

In 1371 A.H. Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was requested to offer his services to the Jami’ul ’Ulúm Institute in Kámpur, U.P., to which request Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه readily complied. During Hadhrat’s stay at the said

Institute Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was appointed Sheikhul-Hadíth in the year 1375 A.H., which gave him the honour of teaching Sahíh Bukhárí Sharíf for several years. In 1384 Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was summoned to the dárul-'ulúm in Deoband where he became Grand Mufti and also taught Volume Two of Sahíh Bukhárí Sharíf. In 1386 A.H. Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was made the Patron of Mazáharul-'Ulúm in Saháranpur. Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه continued to render his Díní services to the dárul-'ulúm in Deoband practically up to his last breath; to the extent that he even taught Hadíth Sharíf this year, before his demise, at the ripe age of 92!

Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه had distinguished and excellent abilities, not only in the field of fiqh and fatáwá, but also in the field of Hadíth Sharíf and tafsír. Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه was the guiding light for the muftis at Deoband, Saháranpur and many other madáris around the world.

In the spiritual field too, Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه excelled and reached great heights and was honoured by being conferred with the mantle of khiláfat by Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hadíth Mauláná Zakariyyah Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. What greater acknowledgment can there be of Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib's رحمة الله عليه proficiency and expertise in fiqh, that a luminary of the calibre of Hadhrat Sheikhul-Hadíth Mauláná Zakariyyah Sáhib رحمة الله عليه used to consult him in resolving intricate Díní masá'il. Dozens of distinguished and prominent 'ulemá' used to be seated in the majális of Hadhrat Sheikh Zakariyyah Sáhib رحمة الله عليه yet, whenever the need arose to enquire the solution to a Díní problem, Hadhrat Sheikh Zakariyyah Sáhib رحمة الله عليه would look around and say: "Summon our Mufti Sáhib!"

Volumes and volumes of Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib's رحمة الله عليه fatáwá have been published thus far.

Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib's رحمة الله عليه last days

Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه had blessed the soil of this country with frequent visits here during the past 15 to 20 years. The purpose of coming here was neither personal gain, nor any lucrative business interests. His sole heartfelt concern was to establish and kindle a true Díní spirit in the lives of the peoples of this country. It was Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib's رحمة الله عليه routine to make i'tikáf in a masjid every year for the entire month of

Ramadhán. South Africa was also blessed in this regard in that Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه made i'tikáf thrice in this country; namely at the Jáme Masjid in Lenasia, Hamídiyyah Masjid in Newtown and the madrasah masjid at Dárul-'Ulúm Zakariyyah. It was due to the virtue and blessings of these types of i'tikáf programmes that a Díní awareness was instilled in the hearts of many a Muslim and this led to the establishment of dárul-'ulúms and halqas of zikr and ta'lím in this country.

Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib's رحمة الله عليه journey to South Africa this year commenced with his arrival on the 20th April 1996. Initially Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib's رحمة الله عليه health was fine and inspite of age and a feeble physique, Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه travelled to different venues in the Transvaal and Natal. The throngs of people that flocked to his discourses and lectures were showered with pearls of knowledge and wisdom. Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه also blessed a number of Tablígh Jamá'at gatherings with his benevolent presence.

Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه had been afflicted for some years with a kidney ailment; this led to an obstruction in his ureter, which was subsequently cleared by means of an operation performed. Shortly after this operation Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه travelled to Durban where he developed a severe bout of coughing. On Hadhrat's return to Johannesburg the illness progressed and was further aggravated when Hadhrat developed a stroke. The stroke affected Hadhrat's swallowing, causing Hadhrat to aspirate food into the lungs. This caused further complications and Hadhrat was admitted on the 28th August to the ICU of a Johannesburg clinic for treatment. A tube was inserted to channel the food directly to the stomach and other measures were adopted, leaving no stone unturned in treating Hadhrat. But Alláh Ta'álá knows better. It was ordained that the sun of an illustrious son of Islám should set, hence at about 7:30 p.m. on the 19th Rabí-'uth Thání 1417/ 22nd September 1996, Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib رحمة الله عليه passed away. Hadhrat was laid to rest in the Elsburg Cemetery the next morning, after an estimated crowd of 10000 had participated in his janázah.

To Alláh Ta'álá do we belong and to Him is our return.

May Alláh Ta'álá fill Hadhrat Mufti Sáhib's رحمة الله عليه qabr with núr and grant Hadhrat Jannatul Firdaus. Ámín.

"THE DEATH OF AN 'ÁLIM IS THE DEATH OF AN ENTIRE WORLD."

MALFÚZÁT OF HADHRAT MUFTÍ MAHMÚD SÁHIB رحمة الله عليه

Alláh Jalla-Jalálahú states that:

Verily, without doubt, that person is successful who has purified his bátin, his inner self.

In this world there are varying concepts with regard to success. One person is in need of a house, he tells himself: "If I get a house, I will be successful. If I build a big and beautiful mansion I will be successful!" Another has need for a shop. He tells himself: "If I obtain a shop in such and such a location, I will be successful!" Another needs to get married. He tells himself: "Were I to get married to such and such person, then will I be successful!" And so forth. Each one has his own concept of what success is.

Who from amongst them is correct? That one is correct whom the Creator of all these individuals confirms to be correct – that individual is successful whom Alláh Ta'álá has truly stated to be correct. Besides His verdict, everything else does not indicate success. All these other items are simple things, items of mere glitter, very rapidly declining and perishing. True success depends on attaining those items that will never decline – those items or qualities that will remain forever.

Through purification (tazkíyah) of the bátin, one attains good qualities (akhláqe fádhilah) and good actions (a'mále sálihah). These are such that they remain with the individual and assist him – in this world, in the qabr on the Day of Hashr as well, on the Pulsirát as well, as well as on the mízán (scales). At every place one will be assisted. Verily, anyone attaining this state he has really attained success! One can easily be fooled by oneself that one has attained good qualities. Take the example of generosity: Just by writing an article on generosity does not make one generous.

Here is a qissah:

In the writings of Hadhrat Báyizid Bustámí Sáhib رحمة الله عليه he states: "I

addressed my nafs and said: 'You are stingy!' My nafs replied: 'Why do you call me stingy? I am very generous!' I said: 'No! You are stingy!' The nafs again said: 'I am generous.' Very well, we shall see.

"The following test was agreed upon by my nafs: I stipulated to my nafs that whatever cash you possess tomorrow you hand over to the first poor person you come across. If the sum is handed over with a happy heart then it will be an indication that you are generous. And if the money is given with an unhappy heart then it indicates that you are stingy."

The next morning, when Hadhrat Báyizid Bustámí Sáhib رحمة الله عليه checked, he saw that he possessed fifty ashrafiyah. He took these and proceeded forth. He soon came across a háfiz who was blind. He was sitting in the barbershop where the barber was cutting his hair. The háfizsáhib was a poor man as seen by his very old and not so clean clothes.

Hadhrat Báyizid Bustámí Sáhib رحمة الله عليه went up to him with a great deal of respect and presented him the money and said: "Háfizsáhib, here are fifty ashrafiyah as a gift for you." The háfizsáhib replied. "It is a good thing that you came along. I have nothing on me to pay the barber his fee. Give this money to him."

Hadhrat Báyizid Bustámí Sáhib رحمة الله عليه thought to himself: "This háfizsáhib is blind. He does not realise how many ashrafiyah there are. Where can the barber's fee for cutting one's hair amount to fifty ashrafiyah?"

The háfizsáhib lifted up his head and addressed Hadhrat Báyizid Bustámí Sáhib رحمة الله عليه. "This is the very reason why you are stingy! Give it! Why are you not handing it over?"

Ofo! He was referring to a very deep matter! Hadhrat Báyizid Bustámí Sáhib رحمة الله عليه felt very ashamed and he picked up all the ashrafiyah and placed them in front of the barber.

But wait, the matter did not end there! The barber said: "The moment I saw háfizsáhib's old and not so clean clothes, I thought and resolved, that I will attend to him solely for the pleasure of Alláh Ta'álá! I am not going to spoil my niyet for this bauble heap. I don't want them!"

Hadhrat Báyizid Bustámí Sáhib رحمة الله عليه narrates: "The amount of humiliation I suffered at that time, I have never experienced at any other time in my life!" He picked up the ashrafiyah and having done so, he

proceeded to the river and threw the whole lot in to the river, saying: “May Alláh Ta’álá ruin you! Whoever attaches his heart to you, he becomes disgraced in this manner!”

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